Paed. Th.
76 4°

Edgeworth

<36622545370019

S

<36622545370019

Bayer. Staatsbibliothek

PRACTICAL EDUCATION.

VOL. I.

251 g

PRACTICAL EDUCATION;

BY

MARIA EDGEWORTH,

AUTHOR OF LETTERS FOR LITERARY LADIES, AND THE PARENT'S ASSISTANT;

AND BY

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH,

F.R.S. and M.R.I.A.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1798.

BIBLIOTHECA
REGIA
MONACENSIS.

PREFACE.

WE ſhall not imitate the invidious example of ſome authors, who think it neceſſary to deſtroy the edifices of others, in order to clear the way for their own. We have no peculiar ſyſtem to ſupport, and, conſequently, we have no temptation to attack the theories of others; and we have choſen the title of Practical Education, to point out that we rely entirely upon practice and experience.

To make any progreſs in the art of education, it muſt be patiently reduced to an experimental ſcience; we are fully ſenſible of the extent and difficulty of this undertaking, and we have not the arrogance to imagine, that we have made any conſiderable progreſs in a work, which the labours of many generations may, per-

haps, be inſufficient to complete; but we lay before the public the reſult of our experiments, and in many inſtances the experiments themſelves. In purſuing this part of our plan, we have ſometimes deſcended from that elevation of ſtyle, which the reader might expect in a quarto volume; we have frequently been obliged to record facts concerning children which may ſeem trifling, and to enter into a minuteneſs of detail which may appear unneceſſary. No anecdotes, however, have been admitted without due deliberation; nothing has been introduced to gratify the idle curioſity of others, or to indulge our own feelings of domeſtic partiality.

In what we have written upon the rudiments of ſcience we have purſued an oppoſite plan; ſo far from attempting to teach them in detail, we refer our readers to the excellent treatiſes on the different branches of ſcience, and on the various faculties of the human mind, which are to be found in every language. The chapters that we have introduced upon theſe ſubjects, are intended merely as ſpecimens of the manner in which we think young children ſhould be taught. We have found from experience, that an early knowledge of the firſt principles of ſcience may be given in converſation, and may be inſenſibly acquired from the uſual incidents of life: if this knowledge be carefully aſſociated with the technical terms which common uſe may preſerve in the memory,

much of the difficulty of ſubſequent inſtruction may be avoided.

The ſketches we have hazarded upon theſe ſubjects may to ſome appear too ſlight, and to others too abſtruſe and tedious. To thoſe who have explored the vaſt mines of human knowledge, ſmall ſpecimens appear trifling and contemptible, whilſt the leſs accuſtomed eye is ſomewhat dazzled and confuſed by the appearance even of a ſmall collection: but to the moſt enlightened minds new combinations may be ſuggeſted by a new arrangement of materials, and the curioſity and enthuſiaſm of the inexperienced may be awakened, and excited to accurate and laborious reſearches.

With reſpect to what is commonly called the education of the heart, we have endeavoured to ſuggeſt the eaſieſt means of inducing uſeful and agreeable habits, well regulated ſympathy and benevolent affections. A witty writer ſays, "Il eſt permis d'ennuyer en moralités d'ici juſqu' à Conſtantinople." Unwilling to avail ourſelves of this permiſſion, we have ſedulouſly avoided declamation, and, wherever we have been obliged to repeat ancient maxims, and common truths, we have at leaſt thought it becoming to preſent them in a new dreſs.

On religion and politics we have been ſilent, becauſe we have

no ambition to gain partizans, or to make proſelytes, and becauſe we do not addreſs ourſelves excluſively to any ſect or to any party. The ſcrutinizing eye of criticiſm, in looking over our table of contents, will alſo, probably, obſerve that there are no chapters on courage and chaſtity. To pretend to teach courage to Britons would be as ridiculous as it is unneceſſary; and, except amongſt thoſe who are expoſed to the contagion of foreign manners, we may boaſt of the ſuperior delicacy of our fair countrywomen; a delicacy acquired from domeſtic example, and confirmed by public approbation. Our opinions concerning the female character and underſtanding have been fully detailed in a former publication *; and, unwilling to fatigue by repetition, we have touched but ſlightly upon theſe ſubjects in our chapters on Temper, Female Accompliſhments, Prudence, and Economy.

We have warned our readers not to expect from us any new theory of education, but they need not apprehend that we have written without method, or that we have thrown before them a heap of deſultory remarks and experiments, which lead to no general concluſions, and which tend to the eſtabliſhment of no uſeful principles. We aſſure them that we have worked upon a regular plan, and where we have failed of executing our deſign, it has not been for want of labour or attention. Convinced that it is

* Letters for Literary Ladies.

the

the duty and the intereſt of all who write, to inquire what others have ſaid and thought upon the ſubject of which they treat, we have examined attentively the works of others, that we might collect whatever knowledge they contain, and that we might neither arrogate inventions which do not belong to us, nor weary the public by repetition. Some uſeful and ingenious eſſays may probably have eſcaped our notice, but we flatter ourſelves, that our readers will not find reaſon to accuſe us of negligence, as we have peruſed with diligent attention every work upon education, that has obtained the ſanction of time or of public approbation, and, though we have never bound ourſelves to the letter, we hope, that we have been faithful to the ſpirit of their authors. Without incumbering ourſelves with any part of their ſyſtems which has not been authorized by experience, we have ſteadily attempted immediately to apply to practice ſuch of their ideas as we have thought uſeful; but whilſt we have uſed the thoughts of others, we have been anxious to avoid mean plagiariſm, and wherever we have borrowed, the debt has been carefully acknowledged.

The firſt hint of the chapter on Toys was received from Dr. Beddoes; the ſketch of an introduction to chemiſtry for children was given to us by Mr. Lovell Edgeworth; and the reſt of the work was reſumed from a deſign formed and begun twenty years ago. When a book appears under the name of two authors, it is natural to inquire what ſhare belongs to each of them. All that

relates

relates to the art of teaching to read in the chapter on Taſks, the chapters on Grammar and Claſſical Literature, Geography, Chronology, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Mechanics, were written by Mr. Edgeworth, and the reſt of the book by Miſs Edgeworth. She was encouraged and enabled to write upon this important ſubject, by having for many years before her eyes the conduct of a judicious mother in the education of a large family. The chapter on Obedience was written from Mrs. Edgeworth's notes, and was exemplified by her ſucceſsful practice in the management of her children; the whole manuſcript was ſubmitted to her judgment, and ſhe reviſed parts of it in the laſt ſtage of a fatal diſeaſe.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

Chap.		Page
I.	*Toys*	1
II.	*Tasks*	37
III.	*On Attention*	75
IV.	*Servants*	119
V.	*Acquaintance*	135
VI.	*On Temper*	155
VII.	*On Obedience*	173
VIII.	*On Truth*	191
IX.	*On Rewards and Punishments*	227
X.	*On Sympathy and Sensibility*	265
XI.	*On Vanity, Pride, and Ambition*	299
XII.	*Books*	317
XIII.	*On Grammar, and Classical Literature*	387
XIV.	*On Geography and Chronology*	417
XV.	*On Arithmetick*	425
XVI.	*Geometry*	447
XVII.	*On Mechanicks*	453
XVIII.	*Chemistry*	489
XIX.	*On Public and Private Education*	499
XX.	*On Female Accomplishments, Masters, and Governesses*	519
XXI.	*Memory and Invention*	553
XXII.	*Taste and Imagination*	603
XXIII.	*Wit and Judgment*	647
XXIV.	*Prudence and Economy*	689
XXV.	*Summary*	713

APPENDIX.

Notes, containing conversations and anecdotes of children 733

MATERIAL ERRATA.

Page	line	
32	13	for *divert*, read direct
60	8 & 11,	before *father*, inſert his
88	17	for *exerted*, r. excited
109	10	for *theſe were*, r. this was
128	11	for *danger*, r. dinner
135	19	for *affection*, r. attention
162	21	inſtead of a period after the word *will*, inſert a comma
179	16	after *ſuch and*, inſert ſuch
183	14	for *That in the difficulty in which our minds are ſtopped or put in motion, there is ſomething analagous to the vis-inſita of body*, r. the difficulty with which our minds are ſtopped or put in motion reſembles the vis-inertiæ of body.
204	13	for *the noiſe was not heard*, r. before the noiſe was heard.
304	laſt line but two,	for *opium*, r. opinion
349	9	for *with*, r. without
418	15	for *artificers*, r. artifices
442	22	after *twenty*, add apples
495	27	for *children left they*, r. a child left he
496	16	before *by fire*, inſert it
506	laſt line but one,	for *chain*, r. chance
508	17	for *arithmetick*, r. prudence
533	18	for *many*, r. marry
537	14	for *reſourſe*, r. recourſe
557	8	for *worth*, r. worthy

The reader is requeſted to read *nor* for *or* in the pages marked in the errata at the end of the vol. and for leſſer errata and corrections ſee the end of the volume.

PRACTICAL

Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München

PRACTICAL EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

TOYS.

" WHY don't you play with your playthings, my dear? I am " ſure that I have bought toys enough for you; why can't you " divert yourſelf with them, inſtead of breaking them to pieces?" ſays a mother to her child, who ſtands idle and miſerable, ſurrounded by disjointed dolls, maimed horſes, coaches and one-horſe chairs without wheels, and a nameleſs wreck of gilded lumber.

A child in this ſituation is ſurely more to be pitied than blamed, for is it not vain to repeat, " Why don't you play with your play- " things," unleſs they be ſuch as he can play with, which is very ſeldom the caſe; and is it not rather unjuſt to be angry with him for breaking them to pieces, when he can by no other device render them ſubſervient to his amuſement? He breaks them, not from

 the

the love of miſchief, but from the hatred of idleneſs; either he wiſhes to ſee what his playthings are made of, and how they are made, or whether he can put them together again if the parts be once ſeparated. All this is perfectly innocent; and it is a pity that his love of knowledge and his ſpirit of activity ſhould be repreſſed by the undiſtinguiſhing correction of a nurſery maid, or the unceaſing reproof of a French governeſs.

The more natural vivacity and ingenuity young people poſſeſs, the leſs are they likely to be amuſed with the toys which are uſually put into their hands. They require to have things which exerciſe their ſenſes or their imagination, their imitative, and inventive powers. The glaring colours, or the gilding of toys, may catch the eye, and pleaſe for a few minutes, but unleſs ſome uſe can be made of them, they will, and ought to be ſoon diſcarded. A boy, who has the uſe of his limbs, and whoſe mind is untainted with prejudice, would in all probability prefer a ſubſtantial cart, in which he could carry weeds, earth, and ſtones, up and down hill, to the fineſt frail coach and ſix that ever came out of a toyſhop: for what could he do with the coach after having admired, and ſucked the paint, but drag it cautiouſly along the carpet of a drawing-room, watching the wheels, which will not turn, and ſeeming to ſympathize with the juſt terrors of the lady and gentleman within, who are certain of being overturned every five minutes. When he is tired of this, perhaps, he may ſet about to unharneſs horſes which were never meant to be unharneſſed; or to currycomb their woollen manes and tails, which uſually come off during the firſt attempt.

That ſuch toys are frail and uſeleſs may, however, be conſidered

as

as evils comparatively ſmall: as long as a child has ſenſe and courage to deſtroy the toys, there is no great harm done; but, in general, he is taught to ſet a value upon them totally independent of all ideas of utility, or of any regard to his own real feelings. Either he is conjured to take particular care of them, becauſe they coſt a great deal of money; or elſe he is taught to admire them as miniatures of ſome of the fine things on which fine people pride themſelves: if no other bad conſequence were to enſue, this ſingle circumſtance of his being guided in his choice by the opinion of others is dangerous. Inſtead of attending to his own ſenſations, and learning from his own experience, he acquires the habit of eſtimating his pleaſures by the taſte and judgment of thoſe who happen to be near him.

"I liked the cart the beſt," ſays the boy, "but mamma and "every body ſaid that the coach was the prettieſt; ſo I choſe the "coach."—Shall we wonder if the ſame principle afterwards governs him in the choice of "the toys of age."

A little girl, preſiding at her baby tea-table, is pleaſed with the notion that ſhe is like her mamma; and, before ſhe can have any idea of the real pleaſures of converſation and ſociety, ſhe is confirmed in the perſuaſion, that tattling and viſiting are ſome of the moſt enviable privileges of grown people; a ſet of beings whom ſhe believes to be in poſſeſſion of all the ſweets of happineſs.

Dolls, beſide the preſcriptive right of ancient uſage, can boaſt of ſuch an able champion in Rouſſeau, that it requires no common ſhare of temerity to attack them. As far as they are the means of inſpiring girls with a taſte for neatneſs in dreſs, and with a deſire

to make thoſe things for themſelves, for which women are uſually dependent upon milliners, we muſt acknowledge their utility; but a watchful eye ſhould be kept upon the child to mark the firſt ſymptoms of a love of finery and faſhion. It is a ſenſible remark of a late female writer, that whilſt young people work, the mind will follow the hands, the thoughts are occupied with trifles, and the induſtry is ſtimulated by vanity.

Our objections to dolls are offered with great ſubmiſſion and due heſitation. With more confidence we may venture to attack baby-houſes; an unfurniſhed baby-houſe might be a good toy, as it would employ little carpenters and ſempſtreſſes to fit it up; but a completely furniſhed baby-houſe proves as tireſome to a child as a finiſhed ſeat is to a young nobleman. After peeping, for in general only a peep can be had into each apartment, after being thoroughly ſatisfied that nothing is wanting, and that conſequently there is nothing to be done, the young lady lays her doll upon the ſtate bed, if the doll be not twice as large as the bed, and falls faſt aſleep in the midſt of her felicity.

Before dolls, baby-houſes, coaches, and cups and ſaucers, there comes a ſet of toys, which are made to imitate the actions of men and women, and the notes or noiſes of birds and beaſts. Many of theſe are ingenious in their conſtruction, and happy in their effect, but that effect unfortunately is tranſitory. When the wooden woman has churned her hour in her empty churn; when the ſtiff-backed man has hammered or ſawed till his arms are broken, or till his employer's arms are tired; when the gilt lamb has ba—ad, the obſtinate pig ſqueaked, and the provoking cuckoo cried cuck—oo, till no one in the houſe can endure the noiſe; what re-

mains to be done?—Woe betide the unlucky little philoſopher, who ſhould think of inquiring why the woman churned, or how the bird cried cuckoo; for it is ten to one that in proſecuting ſuch an inquiry, juſt when he is upon the eve of diſcovery, he ſnaps the wire, or perforates the bellows, and there enſue "a "death-like ſilence, and a dread repoſe."

The grief which is felt for ſpoiling a new plaything might be borne, if it were not increaſed, as it commonly is, by the reproaches of friends; much kind eloquence, upon theſe occaſions, is frequently diſplayed, to bring the ſufferer to a proper ſenſe of his folly, till in due time the contrite corners of his mouth are drawn down, his wide eyes fill with tears, and, without knowing what he means, he promiſes never to be ſo ſilly any more. The future ſafety of his worthleſs playthings is thus purchaſed at the expence of his underſtanding, perhaps of his integrity: for children ſeldom ſcrupulouſly adhere to promiſes, which they have made to eſcape from impending puniſhment.

We have ventured to object to ſome faſhionable toys; we are bound at leaſt to propoſe others in their place; and we ſhall take the matter up ſoberly from the nurſery.

The firſt toys for infants ſhould be merely ſuch things as may be graſped without danger, and which might, by the difference of their ſizes, invite compariſon: round ivory or wooden ſticks ſhould be put into their little hands; by degrees they will learn to lift them to their mouths, and they will diſtinguiſh their ſizes: ſquare and circular bits of wood, balls, cubes, and triangles, with holes of different ſizes made in them, to admit the ſticks, ſhould be their play-

playthings. No greater apparatus is neceſſary for the amuſment of the firſt months of an infant's life. To eaſe the pain which they feel from cutting teeth, infants generally carry to their mouths whatever they can lay their hands upon; but they ſoon learn to diſtinguiſh thoſe bodies which relieve their pain, from thoſe which gratify their palate; and, if they are left to themſelves, they will always chooſe what is painted in preference to every thing elſe; nor muſt we attribute the look of delight with which they ſeize toys that are painted red, merely to the pleaſure which their eye takes in the bright colour, but to the love of the ſweet taſte which they ſuck from the paint. What injury may be done to the health by the quantity of lead which is thus ſwallowed, we will not pretend to determine, but we refer to a medical name of high authority*, whoſe cautions probably will not be treated with neglect. To gratify the eye with glittering objects, if this be neceſſary, may be done with more ſafety by toys of tin and poliſhed iron: a common ſteel button is a more deſirable plaything to a young child than many expenſive toys; a few ſuch buttons tied together, ſo as to prevent any danger of their being ſwallowed, would continue for ſome time a ſource of amuſement.

When a nurſe wants to pleaſe or to pacify a child, ſhe ſtuns its ear with a variety of noiſes, or dazzles its eye with glaring colours or ſtimulating light. The eye and the ear are thus fatigued without advantage, and the temper is huſhed to a tranſient calm by expedients, which in time muſt loſe their effect, and which can have no power over confirmed fretfulneſs. The pleaſure of exerciſing their ſenſes is in itſelf ſufficient to children without any fac-

* Dr. Fothergill.

titious

titious ſtimulus, which only exhauſts their excitability, and renders them incapable of being amuſed by a variety of common objects, which would naturally be their entertainment. We do not here ſpeak of the attempts made to ſooth a child who is ill; "to "charm the ſenſe of pain," ſo far as it can be done by diverting the child's attention from his own ſufferings to outward objects, is humane and reaſonable, provided our compaſſion does not induce in the child's mind the expectation of continual attendance, and that impatience of temper which increaſes bodily ſuffering. It would be in vain to read lectures on philoſophy to a nurſe, or to expect ſtoiciſm from an infant; but perhaps, where mothers pay attention themſelves to their children, they will be able to prevent many of the conſequences of vulgar prejudice and folly. A nurſe's wiſh is to have as little trouble as poſſible with the child committed to her charge, and at the ſame time to flatter the mother, from whom ſhe expects her reward. The appearance of extravagant fondneſs for the child, of inceſſant attention to its humour, and abſurd ſubmiſſion to its caprices, ſhe imagines to be the ſureſt method of recommending herſelf to favour. She is not to be impoſed upon by the faint and affected rebukes of the fond mother, who exclaims, "Oh, nurſe, indeed you *do* ſpoil that child ſadly!—Oh, "nurſe, upon my word ſhe governs you entirely!—Nurſe, you "muſt not let her have her own way always.—Never mind her "crying, I beg, nurſe."——Nurſe ſmiles, ſees that ſhe has gained her point, and promiſes what ſhe knows that it is not expected ſhe ſhould perform. Now if, on the contrary, ſhe perceived that the mother was neither to be flattered nor pleaſed by theſe means, one motive for ſpoiling the child would immediately ceaſe: another ſtrong one would, it is true, ſtill remain. A nurſe wiſhes to ſave herſelf trouble, and ſhe frequently conſults her own convenience.

ence when ſhe humours an infant. She huſhes it to ſleep, that ſhe may leave it ſafely; ſhe ſtops it from crying, that ſhe may not hear an irritating noiſe, that ſhe may relieve herſelf as ſoon as poſſible from the painful weakneſs of compaſſion, or that ſhe may avoid the danger of being interrogated by the family as to the cauſe of the diſturbance. It is leſs trouble to her to yield to caprice and ill-humour than to prevent or cure it, or at leaſt ſhe thinks it is ſo. In reality it is not; for a humoured child in time plagues its attendant infinitely more than it would have done with reaſonable management. If it were poſſible to convince nurſes of this, they would ſacrifice perhaps the convenience of a moment to the peace of future hours, and they would not be eager to quell one ſtorm, at the hazard of being obliged to endure twenty more boiſterous; the candle would then no more be thruſt almoſt into the infant's eyes to make it take notice of the light through the miſt of tears, the eternal bunch of keys would not dance and jingle at every peeviſh ſummons, or would the roarings of paſſion be overpowered by inſulting ſongs, or ſoothed by artful careſſes; the child would then be careſſed and amuſed when he looks ſmiling and good-humoured, and all parties would be much happier.

Practical education begins very early, even in the nurſery; without the mountebank pretence, that miracles can be performed by the turning of a ſtraw, or the dictatorial anathematizing tone, which calls down vengeance upon thoſe who do not follow to an iota the injunctions of a theoriſt. We may ſimply obſerve, that parents would ſave themſelves a great deal of trouble, and their children ſome pain, if they would pay ſome attention to their early education. The temper acquires habits much earlier than is uſually apprehended; the firſt impreſſions which infants receive, and the

the firſt habits which they learn from their nurſes, influence the temper and diſpoſition long after the ſlight cauſes which produced them are forgotten. More care and judgment than uſually fall to the ſhare of a nurſe are neceſſary, to cultivate the diſpoſition which infants ſhew to exerciſe their ſenſes, ſo as neither to ſuffer them to become indolent and torpid from want of proper objects to occupy their attention, nor yet to exhauſt their ſenſes by continual excitation. By ill-timed reſtraints, or injudicious incitements, the nurſe frequently renders the child obſtinate or paſſionate. An infant ſhould never be interrupted in its operations; whilſt it wiſhes to uſe its hands, we ſhould not be impatient to make it walk, or when it is pacing with all the attention to its centre of gravity that is exerted by a rope-dancer, ſuddenly arreſt its progreſs, and inſiſt upon its pronouncing the ſcanty vocabulary which we have compelled it to learn. When children are buſily trying experiments upon objects within their reach, we ſhould not, by way of ſaving them trouble, break the courſe of their ideas, and totally prevent them from acquiring knowledge by their own experience. When a fooliſh nurſe ſees a child attempting to reach or lift any thing, ſhe runs immediately, "Oh, dear love, it can't do it, it can't!—I'll do it for it, ſo I will!"—If the child be trying the difference between puſhing and pulling, rolling or ſliding, the powers of the wedge or the lever, the officious nurſe haſtens inſtantly to diſplay her own knowledge of the mechanic powers; "Stay, love, ſtay; that is not the way to do it—I'll ſhew it the "right way—See here—look at me, love."——Without interrupting a child in the moment of action, proper care might previouſly be taken to remove out of its way thoſe things which can really hurt it, and a juſt degree of attention muſt be paid to its firſt experiments upon hard and heavy, and more eſpecially upon ſharp,

brittle, and burning bodies; but this degree of care ſhould not degenerate into cowardice; it is better that a child ſhould tumble down or burn its fingers, than that it ſhould not learn the uſe of its limbs and its ſenſes. We ſhould for another reaſon take care to put all dangerous things effectually out of the child's reach, inſtead of ſaying perpetually, "Take care, don't touch that!—"don't do that!—let that alone!"—The child, who ſcarcely underſtands the words, and not at all the reaſon of theſe prohibitions, is frightened by the tone and countenance with which they are uttered and accompanied, and he either becomes indolent or cunning; either he deſiſts from exertion, or ſeizes the moment to divert himſelf with forbidden objects, when the watchful eye that guards them is withdrawn. It is in vain to encompaſs the reſtleſs priſoner with a fortification of chairs, and to throw him an old almanack to tear to pieces, or an old pincuſhion to explore; the enterprizing adventurer ſoon makes his eſcape from this barricado, leaves his goods behind him, and preſently is again in what the nurſe calls miſchief.

Miſchief is with nurſes frequently only another name for any ſpecies of activity which they find troubleſome; the love which children are ſuppoſed to have for pulling things out of their places, is in reality the deſire of ſeeing things in motion, or of putting things into different ſituations. They will like to put the furniture in a room in its proper place, and to arrange every thing in what we call order, if we can make theſe equally permanent ſources of active amuſement; but when things are once in their places, the child has nothing more to do, and the more quickly each chair arrives at its deſtined ſituation, the ſooner comes the dreaded ſtate of idleneſs and quiet.

A nurſery, or a room in which young children are to live, ſhould never have any furniture in it which they can ſpoil; as few things as poſſible ſhould be left within their reach which they are not to touch, and at the ſame time they ſhould be provided with the means of amuſing themſelves, not with painted or gilt toys, but with pieces of wood of various ſhapes and ſizes, which they may build up and pull down, and put in a variety of different forms and poſitions; balls, pulleys, wheels, ſtrings, and ſtrong little carts, proportioned to their age, and to the things which they want to carry in them, ſhould be their playthings.

Prints will be entertaining to children at a very early age; it would be endleſs to enumerate the uſes that may be made of them; they teach accuracy of ſight, they engage the attention, and employ the imagination. In 1777 we ſaw L——, a child of two years old, point out every piece of furniture in the French prints of Gil Blas; in the print of the Canon at Dinner, he diſtinguiſhed the knives, forks, ſpoons, bottles, and every thing upon the table; the dog lying upon the mat, and the bunch of keys hanging at Jacintha's girdle; he told, with much readineſs, the occupation of every figure in the print, and could ſupply from his imagination what is ſuppoſed to be hidden by the foremoſt parts of all the objects. A child of four years old was aſked, what was meant by ſomething that was very indiſtinctly repreſented as hanging round the arm of a figure in one of the prints of the London Cries. He ſaid it was a glove, though it had as little reſemblance to a glove as to a ribbon or a purſe. When he was aſked how he knew that it was a glove, he anſwered, "that it ought to be a "glove, becauſe the woman had one upon her other arm, and "none upon that where the thing was hanging." Having ſeen

the gown of a female figure in a print hanging obliquely, the ſame child ſaid, " The wind blows that woman's gown back." We mention theſe little circumſtances from real life, to ſhew how early prints may be an amuſement to children, and how quickly things unknown are learnt by the relations which they bear to what was known before. We ſhould at the ſame time obſerve, that children are very apt to make ſtrange miſtakes, and haſty concluſions, when they begin to reaſon from analogy. A child having aſked what was meant by ſome marks in the forehead of an old man in a print; and having been told upon ſome occaſion, that old people were wiſer than young ones, brought a print containing ſeveral figures to his mother, and told her that *one*, which he pointed to, was wiſer than all the reſt; upon inquiry, it was found that he had formed this notion from ſeeing that one figure was wrinkled, and that the others were not.

Prints for children ſhould be choſen with great care; they ſhould repreſent objects which are familiar, the reſemblances ſhould be accurate, and the manners ſhould be attended to, or at leaſt the general moral that is to be drawn from them. The attitude of Sephora, the boxing lady in Gil Blas, muſt appear unnatural to children who have not lived with termagant heroines. Perhaps, the firſt ideas of grace, beauty, and propriety, are conſiderably influenced by the firſt pictures and prints which pleaſe children. Sir Joſhua Reynolds tells us, that he took a child with him through a room full of pictures, and that the child ſtopped, with ſigns of averſion, whenever it came to any picture of a figure in a conſtrained attitude.

Children ſoon judge tolerably well of proportion in drawing, where

where they have been uſed to ſee the objects which are repreſented: but we often give them prints of objects, and of animals eſpecially, which they have never ſeen, and in which no ſort of proportion is obſerved. The common prints of animals muſt give children falſe ideas. The mouſe and the elephant are nearly of the ſame ſize, and the crocodile and whale fill the ſame ſpace in the page. Painters, who put figures of men amongſt their buildings, give the idea of the proportionate height immediately to the eye: this is, perhaps, the beſt ſcale we can adopt; in every print for children this ſhould be attended to. Some idea of the relative ſizes of the animals they ſee repreſented would then be given, and the imagination would not be filled with chimeras.

After having been accuſtomed to examine prints, and to trace their reſemblance to real objects, children will probably wiſh to try their own powers of imitation. At this moment no toy, which we could invent for them, would give them half ſo much pleaſure as a pencil. If we do not put a pencil into their hands before they are able to do any thing with it, but make random marks all over a ſheet of paper, it will long continue a real amuſement and occupation. No matter how rude their firſt attempts at imitation may be; if the attention of children be occupied, our point is gained. Girls have generally one advantage at this age over boys, in the excluſive poſſeſſion of the ſciſſars: how many camels, and elephants with amazing trunks, are cut out by the induſtrious ſciſſars of a buſy, and therefore happy little girl, during a winter evening, which paſſes ſo heavily, and appears ſo immeaſurably long, to the idle.

Modelling in clay or wax might probably be a uſeful amuſe-

ment

ment about this age, if the materials were ſo prepared, that the children could avoid being every moment troubleſome to others whilſt they are at work. The making of baſkets, and the weaving of faſh line, might perhaps be employment for children; with proper preparations, they might at leaſt be occupied with theſe things; much, perhaps, might not be produced by their labours, but it is a great deal to give early habits of induſtry. Let us do what we will, every perſon who has ever had any experience upon the ſubject, muſt know that it is ſcarcely poſſible to provide ſufficient and ſuitable occupations for young children: this is one of the firſt difficulties in education. Thoſe who have never tried the experiment, are aſtoniſhed to find it ſuch a difficult and laborious buſineſs as it really is, to find employments for children from three to ſix years old. It is perhaps better, that our pupils ſhould be entirely idle, than that they ſhould be half employed. "My dear, "have you nothing to do?" ſhould be ſpoke in ſorrow rather than in anger. When they ſee other people employed and happy, children feel mortified and miſerable to have nothing to do. Count Rumford's was an excellent ſcheme for exciting ſympathetic induſtry amongſt the children of the poor at Munich; in the large hall, where the elder children were buſy in ſpinning, there was a range of ſeats for the younger children, who were not yet permitted to work; theſe being compelled to ſit idle, and to ſee the buſy multitude, grew extremely uneaſy in their own ſituation, and became very anxious to be employed. We need not uſe any compulſion or any artifice; parents in every family, we ſuppoſe, who think of educating their own children, are employed ſome hours in the day in reading, writing, buſineſs, or converſation; during theſe hours, children will naturally feel the want of occupation, and will, from ſympathy, from ambition, and from impatience

patience of insupportable ennui, desire with anxious faces, " to " have something to do." Instead of loading them with playthings, by way of relieving their misery, we should honestly tell them, if that be the truth, " I am sorry I cannot find any thing " for you to do at present. I hope you will soon be able to em- " ploy yourself. What a happy thing it will be for you to be able, " by and by, to read, and write, and draw; then you will never " be forced to sit idle."

The pains of idleness stimulate children to industry, if they are from time to time properly contrasted with the pleasures of occupation. We should associate cheerfulness, and praise, and looks of approbation, with industry; and, whenever young people invent employments for themselves, they should be assisted as much as possible, and encouraged. At that age when they are apt to grow tired in half an hour of their playthings, whatever they may be, we had better give them playthings only for a very short time, at intervals, in the day; and, instead of waiting till they are tired, we should take the things away before they are weary of them. Nor should we discourage the inquisitive genius from examining into the structure of their toys, whatever they may be. The same ingenious and active dispositions, which prompt these inquiries, will secure children from all those numerous temptations to do mischief, to which the idle are exposed. Ingenious children are pleased with contrivances which answer the purposes for which they are intended, and they feel sincere regret whenever these are injured or destroyed: this we mention as a further comfort and security for parents, who, in the company of young mechanics, are apt to tremble for their furniture. Children who observe, and who begin

to

to amuſe themſelves with *thought*, are not ſo actively hoſtile in their attacks upon inanimate objects.

We were once preſent at the diſſection of a wooden cuckoo, which was attended with extreme pleaſure by a large family of children; and it was not one of the children who broke the pre-cious toy, but it was the father who took it to pieces. Nor was it the deſtruction of the plaything which entertained the company, but the ſight of the manner in which it was conſtructed. Many gueſſes were made by all the ſpectators about the internal ſtructure of the cuckoo, and the aſtoniſhment of the company was univerſal, when the bellows were cut open, and the ſimple contrivance was revealed to view; probably, more was learnt by this cuckoo, than was ever learnt from any cuckoo before. So far from being indifferent to the deſtruction of her plaything, H——, the little girl of four years old to whom it belonged, remembered, ſeveral months afterwards, to remind her father of his promiſe to repair the miſchief he had done.

" Several toys, which are made at preſent, are calculated to " give pleaſure merely by exciting ſurpriſe, and of courſe give " children's minds ſuch a tone, that they are afterwards too fond " of *ſimilar uſeleſs baubles* *." This ſpecies of delight is ſoon over, and is ſucceeded by a deſire to triumph in the ignorance, the credulity, or the cowardice, of their companions. Hence that propenſity to play tricks, which is often injudiciouſly encouraged by the ſmiles of parents, who are apt to miſtake it for a proof of wit and vivacity. They forget, that " gentle dullneſs ever loved a joke;"

* Dr. Beddoes.

and

and that even wit and vivacity, if they become troubleſome and miſchievous, will be feared, and ſhunned. Many juggling tricks and puzzles are highly ingenious; and, as far as they can exerciſe the invention or the patience of young people, they are uſeful. Care, however, ſhould be taken, to ſeparate the ideas of deceit and of ingenuity, and to prevent children from glorying in the mere poſſeſſion of a ſecret.

Toys which afford trials of dexterity and activity, ſuch as tops, kites, hoops, balls, battledores and ſhuttlecocks, ninepins, and cup and ball, are excellent; and we ſee that they are conſequently great and laſting favourites with children; their ſenſes, their underſtanding, and their paſſions, are all agreeably intereſted and exerciſed by theſe amuſements. They emulate each other; but, as ſome will probably excel at one game, and ſome at another, this emulation will not degenerate into envy. There is more danger that this hateful paſſion ſhould be created in the minds of young competitors at thoſe games, where it is ſuppoſed that ſome *knack* or *myſtery* is to be learned before they can be played with ſucceſs. Whenever children play at ſuch games, we ſhould point out to them how and why it is that they ſucceed or fail: we may ſhew them, that, in reality, there is no *knack* or *myſtery* in any thing, but that from certain cauſes certain effects will follow; that, after trying a number of experiments, the circumſtances eſſential to ſucceſs may be diſcovered; and that all the eaſe and dexterity, which we often attribute to the power of natural genius, is ſimply the conſequence of practice and induſtry. This ſober leſſon may be taught to children without putting it into grave words, or without formal precepts. A gentleman once aſtoniſhed a family of children by his dexterity in playing at bilboquet: he caught the ball

nine or ten times ſucceſſively with great rapidity upon the ſpike; this ſucceſs appeared miraculous, and the father, who obſerved that it had made a great impreſſion upon the little ſpectators, took that opportunity to ſhew the uſe of ſpinning the ball, to make the hole at the bottom aſcend in a proper direction. The nature of centrifugal motion, and its effect in preſerving *the paralleliſm of motion*, if we may be allowed the expreſſion, was explained, not at once, but at different intervals, to the young audience. Only as much was explained at a time as the children could underſtand, without fatiguing their attention, and the abſtruſe ſubject was made familiar by the mode of illuſtration that was adopted.

It is ſurpriſing how much children may learn from their play-things when they are judiciouſly choſen, and when the habit of reflexion and obſervation is aſſociated with the ideas of amuſement and happineſs. A little boy of nine years old, who had had a hoop to play with, aſked "why a hoop, or a plate, if rolled upon its "edge, keeps up as long as it rolls, but falls as ſoon as it ſtops, "and will not ſtand if you try to make it ſtand ſtill upon its "edge." Was not the boy's underſtanding as well employed whilſt he was thinking of this phænomenon, which he obſerved whilſt he was beating his hoop, as it could poſſibly have been by the moſt learned preceptor?

When a pedantic ſchoolmaſter ſees a boy eagerly watching a paper kite, he obſerves, "What a pity it is that children cannot be "made to mind their grammar as well as their kites!" and he adds perhaps ſome peeviſh ejaculation on the natural idleneſs of boys, and that pernicious love of play againſt which he is doomed to wage perpetual war. A man of ſenſe will ſee the ſame ſight with

with a different eye; in this pernicious love of play he will diſcern the ſymptoms of a love of ſcience, and, inſtead of deploring the natural idleneſs of children, he will admire the activity which they diſplay in the purſuit of knowledge. He will feel that it is his buſineſs to direct this activity, to furniſh his pupil with materials for freſh combinations, to put him, or to let him put himſelf, in ſituations where he can make uſeful obſervations, and acquire that experience which cannot be bought, and which no maſters can communicate.

It will not be beneath the dignity of a philoſophic tutor to conſider the different effects, which the moſt common plays of children have upon the habits of the underſtanding and temper. Whoever has watched children putting together a diſſected map, muſt have been amuſed with the trial between Wit and Judgment. The child who quickly perceives reſemblances catches inſtantly at the firſt bit of the wooden map, that has a ſingle hook or hollow that ſeems likely to anſwer his purpoſe; he makes perhaps twenty different trials before he hits upon the right; whilſt the wary youth, who has been accuſtomed to obſerve differences, cautiouſly examines with his eye the whole outline before his hand begins to move; and, having exactly compared the two indentures, he joins them with ſober confidence, more proud of never diſgracing his judgment by a fruitleſs attempt, than ambitious of rapid ſucceſs. He is ſlow, but ſure, and wins the day.

There are ſome plays which require preſence of mind, and which demand immediate attention to what is actually going forward, in which children capable of the greateſt degree of abſtract attention are moſt apt to be defective. They have many ideas, but none of

them ready, and their knowledge is uſeleſs, becauſe it is recollected a moment too late. Could we in ſuitably dignified language deſcribe the game of "birds, beaſts, and fiſhes," we ſhould venture to preſcribe it as no very painful remedy for theſe abſent and abſtracted perſonages. When the handkerchief or the ball is thrown, and when his bird's name is called for, the abſent little philoſopher is obliged to collect his ſcattered thoughts inſtantaneouſly, or elſe he expoſes himſelf to the ridicule of naming perhaps a fiſh or a beaſt, or any bird but the right. To thoſe children who, on the contrary, are not ſufficiently apt to abſtract their attention, and who are what Bacon calls "birdwitted," we ſhould recommend a ſolitary-board. At the ſolitary-board they muſt withdraw their thoughts from all external objects, hear nothing that is ſaid, and fix their attention ſolely upon the figure and the pegs before them, elſe they will never ſucceed; and if they make one errour in their calculations, they loſe all their labour. Thoſe who are precipitate, and not ſufficiently attentive to the conſequences of their own actions, may receive many ſalutary leſſons at the draught or cheſs-board, happy if they can learn prudence and foreſight by frequently loſing the battle.

We are not quite ſo abſurd as to imagine, that any great or permanent effects can be produced by ſuch ſlight cauſes as a game at draughts, or at a ſolitary-board, but the combination of a number of apparent trifles is not to be neglected in education.

We have never yet mentioned what will probably firſt occur to thoſe who would invent employments for children. We have never yet mentioned a garden; we have never mentioned thoſe great delights to children, a ſpade, a hoe, a rake, a wheelbarrow. We hold

hold all theſe in proper reſpect, but we did not ſooner mention them, becauſe, if introduced too early, they are uſeleſs. We muſt not expect that a boy of ſix or ſeven years old can find for any length of time ſufficient daily occupation in a garden: he has not ſtrength for hard labour; he can dig ſoft earth, he can weed groundſel and other weeds which take no deep root in the earth; but after he has weeded his little garden, and ſowed his ſeeds, there muſt be a ſuſpenſion of his labours: frequently children, for want of ſomething to do, when they have ſowed flower-ſeeds in their crooked beds, dig up the hopes of the year to make a new walk, or to ſink for a well in their garden. We mention theſe things that parents may not be diſappointed, or expect more from the occupation of a garden than it can at a very early age afford. A garden is an excellent reſource for children, but they ſhould have a variety of other occupations: rainy days will come, and froſt and ſnow, and then children muſt be occupied within doors. We immediately think of a little ſet of carpenters tools, to ſupply them with active amuſement. Boys will probably be more inclined to attempt making models than drawings of the furniture which appears to be the moſt eaſy to imitate; they will imagine that, if they had but tools, they could make boxes, and deſks, and beds, and cheſts of drawers, and tables, and chairs innumerable. But, alas! theſe fond imaginations are too ſoon diſſipated. Suppoſe a boy of ſeven years old to be provided with a ſmall ſet of carpenter's tools, his father thinks perhaps that he has made him completely happy; but a week afterwards the father finds dreadful marks of the file and ſaw upon his mahogany tables; the uſe of theſe tools is immediately interdicted until a bench ſhall be procured. Week after week paſſes away, till at length the frequently reiterated ſpeech of, "Papa, you bid me put you in mind about my bench, "Papa!"

"Papa!" has its effect, and the bench appears. Now the young carpenter thinks he is quite ſet up in the world, and projects carts and boxes, and reading deſks and writing-deſks for himſelf and for his ſiſters, if he have any; but when he comes to the execution of his plans, what new difficulties, what new wants ariſe! the wood is too thick or too thin; it ſplits, or it cannot be cut with a knife; wire, nails, glue, and, above all, the means of heating the glue, are wanting. At laſt ſome frail machine, ſtuck together with pegs or pins, is produced, and the workman is uſually either too much ridiculed, or too much admired. The ſtep from pegging to morticing is a very difficult ſtep, and the want of a morticing chiſel is inſuperable: one tool is called upon to do the duty of another, and the pricker comes to an untimely end in doing the hard duty of the punch; the ſaw wants ſetting; the plane will plane no longer; and the mallet muſt be uſed inſtead of the hammer, becauſe the hammer makes ſo much noiſe, that the ladies of the family have voted for its being locked up. To all theſe various evils the child ſubmits in deſpair, and finding, after many fruitleſs exertions, that he cannot make any of the fine things he had projected, he throws aſide his tools, and is deterred by theſe diſappointments from future induſtry and ingenuity. Such are the conſequences of putting excellent tools into the hands of children before they can poſſibly uſe them: but the tools which are uſeleſs at ſeven years old will be a moſt valuable preſent at eleven or twelve, and for this age it will be prudent to reſerve them. A rational toy-ſhop ſhould be provided with all manner of carpenter's tools, with wood properly prepared for the young workman, and with ſcrews, nails, glue, emery paper, and a variety of articles which it would be tedious to enumerate; but which, if parents could readily meet with in a convenient aſſemblage, they would willingly

lingly purchaſe for their children. The trouble of hunting through a number of different ſhops prevents them at preſent from purchaſing ſuch things; beſides, perhaps they may not be ſufficiently good carpenters to know diſtinctly every thing that is neceſſary for a young workman.

Card, paſteboard, ſubſtantial, but not ſharp pointed, ſciſſars, wire, gum, and wax, may in ſome degree ſupply the want of carpenter's tools at that early age when we have obſerved that the ſaw and plane are uſeleſs. Models of common furniture ſhould be made as toys, which ſhould take to pieces, ſo that all their parts, and the manner in which they are put together, might be ſeen diſtinctly; the names of the different parts ſhould be written * or ſtamped upon them: by theſe means the names will be aſſociated with realities, children will retain them in their memory, and they will neither learn by rote technical terms, nor will they be retarded in their progreſs in mechanical invention by the want of language. Before young people can uſe tools, theſe models will amuſe and exerciſe their attention. From models of furniture we may go on to models of architecture; pillars of different orders, the roofs of houſes, the manner of ſlating and tiling, &c. Then we may proceed to models of ſimple machines, chooſing at firſt ſuch as can be immediately uſeful to children in their own amuſements, ſuch as wheelbarrows, carts, cranes, ſcales, ſteelyards, jacks, and pumps, which children ever view with eager eyes.

From ſimple it will be eaſy to proceed gradually to models of more complicated machinery: it would be tireſome to give a liſt of

* We are indebted to Dr. Beddoes for this idea.

theſe ; models of inſtruments uſed by manufacturers and artiſts ſhould be ſeen ; many of theſe are extremely ingenious : ſpinning wheels, looms, paper-mills, wind-mills, water-mills, might with great advantage be ſhewn in miniature to children.

The diſtracting noiſe and buſtle, the multitude of objects which all claim the attention at once, prevent young people from underſtanding much of what they ſee, when they are firſt taken to look at large manufactories. If they had previouſly acquired ſome general idea of the whole, and ſome particular knowledge of the different parts, they would not ſtare when they get into theſe places ; they would not "ſtare round, ſee nothing, and come home con-"tent," bewildered by the ſight of cogs and wheels ; and the explanations of the workmen would not be all jargon to them ; they would underſtand ſome of the technical terms, which ſo much alarm the intellects of thoſe who hear them for the firſt time.

We may exerciſe the ingenuity and judgment of children by theſe models of machines, by ſhewing them firſt the thing to be done, and exciting them to invent the beſt means of doing it ; afterwards give the models as the reward for their ingenuity, and let them compare their own inventions with the contrivances actually in uſe amongſt artificers : by theſe means young people may be led to compare a variety of different contrivances ; they will diſcern what parts of a machine are ſuperfluous, and what inadequate, and they will claſs particular obſervations gradually under general principles. It may be thought, that this will tend to give children only mechanical invention, or we ſhould call it perhaps the invention of machines ; and thoſe who do not require this particular talent, will deſpiſe it as unneceſſary in what are

called the liberal profeſſions. Without attempting to compare the value of different intellectual talents, we may obſerve, that they are all in ſome meaſure dependent upon each other. Upon this ſubject we ſhall enlarge more fully when we come to conſider the method of cultivating the memory and invention.

Chemical toys will be more difficult to manage than mechanical, becauſe the materials, requiſite to try many chemical experiments, are ſuch as cannot ſafely be put into the hands of children. But a liſt of experiments, and of the things neceſſary to try them, might eaſily be drawn out by a chemiſt who would condeſcend to ſuch a taſk; and if theſe materials, with proper directions, were to be found at a rational toy-ſhop, parents would not be afraid of burning or poiſoning their children in the firſt chemical leſſons. In ſome families girls are taught the confectionary art; might not this be advantageouſly connected with ſome knowledge of chemiſtry, and might not they be better taught than by Mrs. Raffeld or Mrs. Glaſs *? Every culinary operation may be performed as an art, probably, as well by a cook as by a chemiſt; but, if the chemiſt did not aſſiſt the cook now and then with a little ſcience, epicures would have great reaſon for lamentation. We do not by any means adviſe, that girls ſhould be inſtructed in confectionary arts at the hazard of their keeping company with ſervants. If they learn any thing of this ſort, there will be many precautions neceſſary to ſeparate them from ſervants: we do not adviſe that theſe hazards ſhould be run; but if girls learn confectionary, let

* We do not mean to do injuſtice to Mrs. Raffeld's profeſſional ſkill.

them learn the principles of chemiſtry, which may aſſiſt in this art *.

Children are very fond of attempting all experiments in dying, and are very curious about vegetable dyes; but they can ſeldom proceed for want of the means of boiling, evaporating, diſtilling, and ſubliming. Small ſtills, and ſmall tea-kettles and lamps, would be extremely uſeful to them: theſe might be uſed in the room with the children's parents, which would prevent all danger: they ſhould continue to be the property of the parents, and ſhould be produced only when they are wanted. No great apparatus is neceſſary for ſhewing children the firſt ſimple operations in chemiſtry; ſuch as evaporation, cryſtallization, calcination, detonation, efferveſcence, and ſaturation. Water and fire, ſalt and ſugar, lime and vinegar, are not very difficult to be procured; and a wine-glaſs is to be found in every houſe. The difference between an acid and alkali ſhould be early taught to children; many grown people begin to learn chemiſtry, without diſtinctly knowing what is meant by thoſe terms.

In the ſelection of chemical experiments for young people, it will be beſt to avoid ſuch as have the appearance of jugglers tricks, as it is not our purpoſe to excite the amazement of children for the moment, but to give them a permanent taſte for ſcience. In a well known book, called "Hooper's *Rational Recreations*," there are

* V. Diderot's ingenious preface to "Chymie de gout et de l'odorat."

many

many ingenious experiments; but through the whole work there is ſuch a want of an enlarged mind, and ſuch a love of magic and deception appears, as muſt render it not only uſeleſs, but unſafe, for young people, in its preſent ſtate. Perhaps, a ſelection might be made from it in which theſe defects might be avoided: ſuch titles as "*The real apparition: the confederate counters: the five beati-*" *tudes:* and *the book of fate*;" may be changed for others more *rational.* Receipts for "*Changing winter into ſpring*," for making "*Self-raiſing pyramids, inchanted mirrors*, and *intelligent flies*," might be omitted, or explained to advantage. Recreation the 5th, "To tell by the dial of a watch at what hour any perſon in-" tends to riſe;" Recreation the twelfth, "To produce the ap-" pearance of a phantom on a pedeſtal placed on the middle of a " table;" and Recreation the thirtieth, "To write ſeveral let-" ters which contain no meaning upon cards, to make them, after " they have been twice ſhuffled, give an anſwer to a queſtion that " ſhall be propoſed;" as, for example, "What is love?" ſcarce-ly come under the denomination of Rational Recreations, nor will they much conduce to the end propoſed in the introduction to Hooper's work; that is to ſay, in his own words, "To enlarge " and fortify the mind of man, that he may advance with tranquil " ſteps through the flowery paths of inveſtigation, till arriving at " ſome noble eminence, he beholds, with awful aſtoniſhment, the " boundleſs regions of ſcience, and becomes animated to attain a " ſtill more lofty ſtation, whilſt his heart is inceſſantly rapt with " joys of which the groveling herd have no conception."

Even in thoſe chemical experiments in this book, which are really ingenious and entertaining, we ſhould avoid giving the old

abſurd titles, which can only confuſe the underſtanding, and ſpoil the taſte of children. The tree of Diana, and "Philoſophic wool," are of this ſpecies. It is not neceſſary to make every thing marvellous and magical, to fix the attention of young people; if they are properly educated, they will find more amuſement in diſcovering or in ſearching for the cauſe of the effects which they ſee, than in a blind admiration of the juggler's tricks.

In the papers of the Mancheſter Society, in Franklin's letters, in Prieſtley's and Percival's works, there may be found a variety of ſimple experiments which require no great apparatus, and which will at once amuſe and inſtruct. All the papers of the Mancheſter Society, upon the repulſion and attraction of oil and water, are particularly ſuited to children, becauſe they ſtate a variety of ſimple facts, the mind is led to reaſon upon them, and induced to judge of the different concluſions which are drawn from them by different people. The names of Dr. Percival, or Dr. Wall, will have no weight with children; they will compare only the reaſons and experiments. Oil and water, a cork, a needle, a plate, and a glaſs tumbler, are all the things neceſſary for theſe experiments. Mr. Henry's experiments upon the influence that fixed air has on vegetation, and ſeveral of Reaumur's experiments, mentioned in the Memoirs of the French Academy of Sciences, are calculated to pleaſe young people much, and can be repeated without expence or difficulty.

To thoſe who acquire habits of obſervation every thing that is to be ſeen or heard becomes a ſource of amuſement. Natural hiſtory intereſts children at an early age; but their curioſity and activity

activity is too often repreſſed and reſtrained by the ignorance or indolence of their tutors. The moſt inquiſitive genius grows tired of repeating, "Pray look at this? What is it? What can the uſe "of this be?" when the conſtant anſwer is, "Oh! it's nothing "worth looking at, throw it away, it will dirty the houſe." Thoſe who have attended to the ways of children and parents well know, that there are many little inconveniencies attending their amuſements, which the ſublime eye of the theoriſt in education overlooks, which, nevertheleſs, are eſſential to practical ſucceſs. "It will dirty the houſe," puts a ſtop to many of the operations of the young philoſopher; nor is it reaſonable that his experiments ſhould interfere with the neceſſary regularity of a well ordered family. But moſt well ordered families allow their horſes and their dogs to have houſes to themſelves; cannot one room be allotted to the children of the family? If they are to learn chemiſtry, mineralogy, botany, or mechanics; if they are to take ſufficient bodily exerciſe without tormenting the whole family with noiſe, a room ſhould be provided for them. We make the bodily exerciſe and the noiſe the climax of our argument, becauſe we think they will to many appear of the moſt importance.

To direct children in their choice of foſſils, and to give them ſome idea of the general arrangements of mineralogy, toyſhops ſhould be provided with ſpecimens of ores, &c., properly labelled and arranged, in drawers, ſo that they may be kept in order; children ſhould have empty ſhelves in their cabinets, to be filled with their own collections. They will then know how to direct their reſearches, and how to diſpoſe of their treaſures. If they have proper places to keep things in, they will acquire a taſte for order by the beſt means, by feeling the uſe of it: to either ſex

this

this taſte will be highly advantageous. Children who are active and induſtrious, and who have a taſte for natural hiſtory, often collect with much enthuſiaſm a variety of pebbles and common ſtones, which they value as great curioſities, till ſome ſurly mineralogiſt happens to ſee them, and condemns them all with one ſupercilious "Pſhaw!" or elſe a journey is to be taken, and there is no way of making up the heterogeneous cumberſome collection, which muſt of courſe be abandoned. Nay, if no journey is to be taken, a viſitor perhaps comes unexpectedly, the little naturaliſt's apartment muſt be vacated on a few minutes notice, and the labour of years falls a ſacrifice in an inſtant to the houſemaid's undiſtinguiſhing broom.

It may ſeem trifling to inſiſt ſo much upon ſuch ſlight things, but in fact nothing can be done in education without attention to minute circumſtances. Many who have genius to ſketch large plans, have ſeldom patience to attend to the detail which is neceſſary for their accompliſhment. This is a uſeful, and therefore no humiliating, drudgery.

With the little cabinets which we have mentioned ſhould be ſold cheap microſcopes, which will unfold a world of new delights to children; and it is very probable that children will not only be entertained with looking at objects through a microſcope, but they will conſider the nature of the magnifying glaſs. They ſhould not be rebuffed with the anſwer, "Oh, it's only a common magnifying glaſs," but they ſhould be encouraged in their laudable curioſity; they may eaſily be led to try ſlight experiments in optics, which will at leaſt give the habits of obſervation and attention. In Dr. Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Viſion many experiments may be found

found which are not above the comprehenſion of children of ten or eleven years old; we do not imagine that any ſcience can be taught by deſultory experiments, but we think that a taſte for ſcience may early be given by making it entertaining, and by exciting young people to exerciſe their reaſoning and inventive faculties upon every object which ſurrounds them. We may point out that great diſcoveries have often been made by attention to ſlight circumſtances. The blowing of ſoap bubbles, as it was firſt performed as a ſcientific experiment by the celebrated Dr. Hook before the Royal Society, makes a conſpicuous figure in Dr. Prieſtley's chapter on the reflexion of light; this may be read to children, and they will be pleaſed when they obſerve that what at firſt appeared only a trifling amuſement, has occupied the underſtanding, and excited the admiration, of ſome great philoſophers.

Every child obſerves the colours which are to be ſeen in panes of glaſs windows; in Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Viſion there are ſome experiments of Hook's and Lord Brereton's upon theſe colours, which may be ſelected. Buffon's obſervations upon blue and green ſhadows are to be found in the ſame work, and they are very entertaining. In Dr. Franklin's Letters there are numerous experiments which are particularly ſuited to young people; eſpecially as in every inſtance he ſpeaks with that candour and openneſs to conviction, and with that patient deſire to diſcover truth, which we ſhould wiſh our pupils to admire and imitate.

The hiſtory of the experiments which have been tried in the progreſs of any ſcience, and of the manner in which obſervations of minute facts have led to great diſcoveries, will be uſeful to the underſtanding, and will gradually make the mind expert in that

mental algebra, on which both reaſoning and invention (which is perhaps only a more rapid ſpecies of reaſoning) depend. In drawing out a liſt of experiments for children it will therefore be advantageous, to place them in that order which will beſt exhibit their relative connexion; and, inſtead of ſhewing young people the ſteps of a diſcovery, we ſhould frequently pauſe to try if they can invent. In this our pupils will ſucceed often beyond our expectations; and, whether it be in mechanics, chemiſtry, geometry, or in the arts, the ſame courſe of education will be found to have the ſame advantages. When the powers of reaſon have been cultivated, and the inventive faculty exerciſed; when general habits of voluntary exertion and patient perſeverance have been acquired, it will be eaſy either for the pupil himſelf, or for his friends, to divert his abilities to whatever is neceſſary for his happineſs. We do not uſe the phraſe, *ſucceſs in the world*, becauſe, if it conveys any diſtinct ideas, it implies ſome which are perhaps inconſiſtent with real happineſs.

Whilſt our pupils occupy and amuſe themſelves with obſervation, experiment, and invention, we muſt take care that they have a ſufficient variety of manual and bodily exerciſes. A turning-lathe, and a work-bench, will afford them conſtant active employment, and when young people can invent, they feel great pleaſure in the execution of their own plans. We do not ſpeak from vague theory; we have ſeen the daily pleaſures of the work-bench, and the perſevering eagerneſs with which young people work in wood, and braſs, and iron, when tools are put into their hands at a proper age, and when their underſtanding has been previouſly taught the ſimple principles of mechanics. It is not to be expected that any exhortations we could uſe could prevail upon a father, who happens

to

to have no taſte for mechanics, or for chemiſtry, to ſpend any of his time in his children's laboratory, or at their work bench; but in his choice of a tutor he may perhaps ſupply his own defects; and he will conſider that even by intereſting himſelf in the daily occupations of his children, he will do more in the advancement of their education than can be done by paying money to a hundred maſters.

We do not mean to confine young people to the laboratory or the work-bench, for exerciſe; the more varied exerciſes the better. Upon this ſubject we ſhall ſpeak more fully hereafter: we have in general recommended all trials of addreſs and dexterity, but games of chance, which we think ſhould be avoided, as they tend to give a taſte for gambling; a paſſion which has been the ruin of ſo many young men of promiſing talents, of ſo many once happy families, that every parent will think it well worth his while to attend to the ſmalleſt circumſtances in education, which can prevent its ſeizing hold of the minds of his children.

In children, as in men, a taſte for gaming ariſes from the want of better occupation, or of proper emotion to relieve them from the pains and penalties of idleneſs; both the vain and indolent are prone to this taſte from different cauſes. The idea of perſonal merit is inſenſibly connected with what is called *good luck*, and before avarice abſorbs every other feeling, vanity forms no inconſiderable part of the charm which fixes ſuch numbers to the gaming-table. Indolent perſons are fond of games of chance, becauſe they feel themſelves rouſed agreeably from their habitual ſtate of apathy, or becauſe they perceive, that at theſe conteſts, without any

mental exertion, they are equal, perhaps ſuperior, to their competitors.

Happy they who have early been inſpired with a taſte for ſcience and literature! they will have a conſtant ſucceſſion of agreeable ideas, they will find endleſs variety in the commoneſt objects which ſurround them, and feeling that every day of their lives they have ſufficient amuſement, they will require no extraordinary excitations, no holiday pleaſures. They who have learnt from their own experience a juſt confidence in their own powers, they who have taſted the delights of well-earned praiſe, will not lightly truſt to *chance* for the increaſe of ſelf-approbation; or will they purſue with too much eagerneſs the precarious triumphs of fortune, who know that in their uſual purſuits it is in their own power to command ſucceſs proportioned to their exertions. Perhaps it may be thought, that we ſhould have deferred our eulogium upon literature till we came to ſpeak of Taſks; but if there uſually appears but little connexion in a child's mind between books and toys, this muſt be attributed to his having had bad books and bad toys. In the hands of a judicious inſtructor no means are too ſmall to be uſeful; every thing is made conducive to his purpoſes, and inſtead of uſeleſs baubles, his pupils will be provided with playthings which may inſtruct, and with occupations which may at once amuſe and improve the underſtanding.

It would be ſuperfluous to give a greater variety of inſtances of the ſorts of amuſements which are advantageous; we fear that we have already given too many, and that we have hazarded ſome obſervations, which will be thought too pompous for a chapter upon Toys.

Toys. We intended to have added to this chapter an inventory of the preſent moſt faſhionable articles in our toy-ſhops, and *a liſt of the new aſſortment*, to ſpeak in the true ſtyle of an advertiſement; but we are obliged to defer this for the preſent: upon a future occaſion we ſhall ſubmit it to the judgment of the public. A revolution even in toy-ſhops ſhould not be attempted, unleſs there appear a moral certainty, that we both may and can change for the better. The danger of doing too much in education is greater even than the danger of doing too little. As the merchants in France anſwered to Colbert, when he deſired to know "how he "could beſt aſſiſt them," children might perhaps reply to thoſe who are moſt officious to amuſe them, "Leave us to ourſelves."

CHAPTER II.

TASKS.

" Why don't you get your taſk, inſtead of playing with your " playthings from morning to night? You are grown too old " now to do nothing but play. It is high time you ſhould learn " to read and write, for you cannot be a child all your life, child; " ſo go and fetch your *book*, and learn your *taſk*."

This angry apoſtrophe is probably addreſſed to a child, at the moment when he is intent upon ſome agreeable occupation, which is now to be ſtigmatized with the name of Play. Why that word ſhould all at once change its meaning; why that ſhould now be a crime, which was formerly a virtue; why he, who had ſo often been deſired to *go and play*, ſhould now be reviled for his obedience; the young caſuiſt is unable to diſcover. He hears that he is no longer a child: this he is willing to believe; but the conſequence is alarming; of the new duties incumbent upon his ſituation he has yet but a confuſed idea. In his manly character he is not yet thoroughly perfect; his pride would make him deſpiſe every thing that is childiſh, but no change has yet been wrought in the inward man, and his old taſtes and new ambition are in direct oppoſition. Whether to learn to read be a dreadful thing or not, is a

queſtion:

queſtion he cannot immediately ſolve; but if his reaſoning faculty be ſuſpended, there is yet a power ſecretly working within him, by which he will involuntarily be governed. This power is the power of aſſociation: of its laws he is probably not more ignorant than his tutor; or is he aware that whatever word or idea comes into his mind with any ſpecies of pain, will return, whenever it is recalled to his memory, with the ſame feelings. The word Taſk, the firſt time he hears it, is an unmeaning word, but it ceaſes to be indifferent to him the moment he hears it pronounced in a terrible voice; "Learn your taſk," and "Fetch your book," recur to his recollection with indiſtinct feelings of pain; and hence, without further conſideration, he will be diſpoſed to diſlike both books and taſks: but his feelings are the laſt things to be conſidered upon this occaſion; the immediate buſineſs is to teach him to read. A new era in his life now commences. The age of learning begins, and begins in ſorrow; the conſequences of a bad beginning are proverbially ominous; but no omens can avert his fate, no omens can deter his tutor from the undertaking; the appointed moment is come; the boy is four years old, and he muſt learn to read. Some people, ſtruck with a panic fear leſt their children ſhould never learn to read and write, think that they cannot be in too great a hurry to teach them. Spelling books, grammars, dictionaries, rods, and maſters, are collected; nothing is to be heard of in the houſe but taſks, nothing is to be ſeen but tears.

"No tears! no taſks! no maſters! nothing upon compulſion!" ſay the oppoſite party in education. "Children muſt be left en-
"tirely at liberty; they will learn every thing better than you
"can teach them; their memory muſt not be overloaded with
"traſh; their reaſon muſt be left to grow."

Their

Their reaſon will never grow, unleſs it be exerciſed, is the reply; their memory muſt be ſtored whilſt they are young, becauſe in youth the memory is moſt tenacious. If you leave them at liberty for ever, they will never learn to ſpell, they will never learn Latin, they will never Latin grammar; yet they muſt learn Latin grammar, and a number of other diſagreeble things, therefore we muſt give them taſks and taſk-maſters.

In all theſe aſſertions perhaps we ſhall find a mixture of truth and error, therefore we had better be governed by neither party, but liſten to both, and examine arguments unawed by authority. And firſt as to the panic fear, which, though no argument, is a moſt powerful motive. We ſee but few examples of children ſo extremely ſtupid as not to have been able to learn to read and write between the years of three and thirteen; but we ſee many whoſe temper and whoſe underſtanding have been materially injured by premature, or injudicious inſtruction; we ſee many who are diſguſted, perhaps irrecoverably, with literature, whilſt they are fluently reading books which they cannot comprehend, or learning words by rote, to which they affix no ideas. It is ſcarcely worth while to ſpeak of the vain ambition of thoſe, who long only to have it ſaid, that their children read ſooner than thoſe of their neighbours do; for ſuppoſing their utmoſt wiſh to be gratified, that their ſon could read before the age when children commonly articulate, ſtill the triumph muſt be of ſhort duration, the fame confined to a ſmall circle of "foes and friends," and probably in a few years the memory of the phænomenon would remain only with his doting grandmother. Surely it is the uſe which children make of their acquirements which is of conſequence, not the poſſeſſing them a few years ſooner or later. A man, who during his

whole

whole life could never write any thing that was worth reading, would find it but poor conſolation for himſelf, his friends, or the public, to reflect, that he had been in joining hand before he was five years old.

As it is uſually managed, it is a dreadful taſk indeed to learn, and if poſſible a more dreadful taſk to teach to read: with the help of counters, and coaxing, and gingerbread, or by dint of reiterated pain and terror, the names of the four and twenty letters of the alphabet are perhaps in the courſe of ſome weeks firmly fixed in the pupil's memory. So much the worſe; all theſe names will diſturb him if he have common ſenſe, and at every ſtep muſt ſtop his progreſs. To begin with the vowels; each of theſe have ſeveral different ſounds, and conſequently ought to have ſeveral names, or different ſigns, to diſtinguiſh them in different circumſtances. In the firſt leſſon of the ſpelling book the child begins with a-b makes ab; b-a makes ba. The inference, if any general inference can be drawn from this leſſon, is, that when *a* comes before *b* it has one ſound, and after *b* it has another ſound; but this is contradicted by and by, and it appears that a after b has various ſounds, as in *ball*, in *bat*, in *bare*. The letter i in *fire* is *i*, as we call it in the alphabet, but in *fir* it is changed; in *pin* it is changed again; ſo that the child being ordered to affix to the ſame ſign a variety of ſounds, and names, and not knowing in what circumſtances to obey, and in what to diſregard the contradictory injunctions impoſed upon him, he pronounces ſounds at hazard, and adheres poſitively to the laſt ruled caſe, or maintains an apparently ſullen, or truly philoſophic and ſceptical ſilence. Muſt *e* in *pen*, and *e* in *where*, and *e* in *verſe*, and *e* in *fear*, all be called e alike? The child is patted on the head for reading *u* as it ought to be pronounced

nounced in *future*; but if, remembering this encouragement, the pupil ſhould venture to pronounce *u* in *gun* and *bun* in the ſame manner, he will inevitably be diſgraced. Pain and ſhame impreſs precepts upon the mind, the child therefore is intent upon remembering the new ſound of *u* in *bun*; but when he comes to *buſy*, and *burial*, and *prudence*, his laſt precedent will lead him fatally aſtray, and he will again be called *dunce*. *O* in the exclamation *Oh!* is happily called by its alphabetical name, but in *to* we can hardly know it again, and in *morning* and *wonder* it has a third and a fourth additional ſound. The amphibious letter *y*, which is either a vowel or a conſonant, has one ſound in one character, and two ſounds in the other; as a conſonant, it is pronounced as in *yeſterday*; in *try*, it is ſounded as *i*; in *any*, and in the termination of many other words, it is ſounded like *e*. Muſt a child know all this by intuition, or muſt it be whipt into him? But he muſt know a great deal more before he can read the moſt common words: what length of time ſhould we allow him for learning when *c* is to be ſounded like *k*, and when like *s*? and how much longer time ſhall we add for learning when *s* ſhall be pronounced *ſh*, as in *ſure*, or *z*, as in *has*; the ſound of which laſt letter *z* he cannot by any conjuration obtain from the name *zad*, the only name by which he has been taught to call it? How m..ch time ſhall we allow a patient tutor for teaching a docile pupil when *g* is to be ſounded ſoft, and when hard? There are many carefully worded rules in the ſpelling books, ſpecifying before what letters, and in what ſituations, *g* ſhall vary in ſound, but unfortunately theſe rules are difficult to be learned by heart, and ſtill more difficult to underſtand. Theſe laws, however poſitive, are not found to be of univerſal application, or at leaſt a child has not always wit or time to apply them upon the ſpur of the occaſion. In coming to the words *ingenious gentleman*,

tleman, get a good grammar, he may be puzzled by the nice diſtinctions he is to make in pronunciation in caſes apparently ſimilar: but he has not yet become acquainted with all the powers of this privileged letter; in company with *h* it aſſumes the character of *f*, as in *tough*: another time he meets it perhaps in the ſame company, in the ſame place, and as nearly as poſſible in the ſame circumſtances, as in the word *though*; but now *g* is to become a ſilent letter, and is to paſs incognito, and the child would commit an unpardonable error if he claimed the incognito as his late acquaintance *f*. Still all theſe are ſlight difficulties; a moment's reflection muſt convince us, that by teaching the common names of every conſonant in the alphabet, we prepare a child for miſery when he begins to ſpell or read. A conſonant, as ſayeth the ſpelling-book, is a letter which cannot be pronounced without a vowel before or after it; for this reaſon *B* is called *be*, and *L*, *el*; but why the vowel ſhould come firſt in the one caſe, or laſt in the ſecond, we are not informed; or are we told why the names of ſome letters have no reſemblance whatever to their ſounds, either with a vowel before or after them. Suppoſe that after having learned the alphabet, a child was to attempt to read the words

Here is ſome apple pye,

He would pronounce the letters thus,

Acheare ies eſoeme apepeele pewie.

With this pronunciation the child would never decypher theſe ſimple words. It will be anſwered, perhaps, that no child is expected to read as ſoon as he has learnt his alphabet: a long initiation of monoſyllabic, diſſyllabic, triſſyllabic, and polyſyllabic words is previouſly

viouſly to be ſubmitted to, nor after this inauguration are the novices capable of performing with propriety the ceremony of reading whole words and ſentences. By a different method of teaching, all this waſte of labour and of time, all this confuſion of rules and exceptions, and all the conſequent confuſion in the underſtanding of the pupil may be avoided.

In teaching a child to read, every letter ſhould have a preciſe ſingle ſound annexed to its figure; this ſhould never vary. Where two conſonants are joined together, ſo as to have but one ſound, as ph, ſh, &c., the two letters ſhould be coupled together by a diſtinct invariable mark. Letters that are ſilent ſhould be marked in ſuch a manner as to point out to the child that they are not to be ſounded. Upon theſe ſimple rules our method of teaching to read has been founded. The ſigns or marks, by which theſe diſtinctions are to be effected, are arbitrary, and may be varied as the teacher chooſes; the addition of a ſingle point above or below the common letters is employed to diſtinguiſh the different ſounds that are given to the ſame letter, and a mark underneath ſuch letters as are to be omitted is the only apparatus neceſſary. Theſe marks were employed by the author in 1776, before he had ſeen Sheridan's, or any ſimilar dictionary; he has found that they do not confuſe children as much as figures, becauſe when dots are uſed to diſtinguiſh ſounds, there is only a change of place, and no change of form: but any perſon that chooſes it may ſubſtitute figures inſtead of dots. It ſhould, however, be remembered, that children muſt learn to diſtinguiſh the figures before they can be uſeful in diſcriminating the words.

All theſe ſounds, and each of the characters which denote them,

ſhould be diſtinctly known by a child before we begin to teach him to read. And here at the firſt ſtep we muſt entreat the teacher to have patience, to fix firmly in her mind; we ſay *her* mind, becauſe we addreſs ourſelves to mothers; that it is immaterial whether a child learns this alphabet in ſix weeks or in ſix months; at all events, let it not be inculcated with reſtraint, or made tireſome, leſt it ſhould retard the whole future progreſs of the pupil. We do not mean to recommend the cuſtom of teaching in play, but ſurely a cheerful countenance is not incompatible with application.

The three ſounds of the letter (a) ſhould firſt be taught; they may be learned by the dulleſt child in a week, if the letters are ſhewn to him for a minute or two twice a-day; proper moments ſhould be choſen when the child is not intent upon any thing elſe, when other children have appeared to be amuſed with reading, when the pupil himſelf appears anxious to be inſtructed. As ſoon as he is acquainted with the ſounds of (a), and with their diſtinguiſhing marks, each of theſe ſounds ſhould be formed into ſyllables, with each of the conſonants; but we ſhould never name the conſonants by their uſual names; if it be required to point them out by ſounds, let them reſemble the real ſounds or powers of the conſonants: but in fact it will never be *neceſſary* to name the conſonants ſeparately, till their powers in combination with the different vowels be diſtinctly acquired. It will then be time enough to teach the common names of the letters. To a perſon unacquainted with the principles upon which this mode of teaching is founded, it muſt appear ſtrange that a child ſhould be able to read before he knows the names of his letters; but it has been aſcertained, that the names of the letters are an incumbrance in teaching a child to read.

Alphabet.

Vowels.

Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in	
a	*fate*	e	*mere*	i	*fine*	o	*throne*	u	*pure*	ẏ	*by*
ȧ	*fat*	ė	*met*	ï	*in*	ȯ	*on*	ü	*busy*	ÿ	*ably*
ạ	*fall*	ẹ	*her*	i̇	*bird*	ọ	*love*	ụ	*sun*		
		ę	*where*	ị	*machine*	o	*move*	u	*full*		

Diphthongs.

Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in	
ea	*Ocean*	ia	*filial*	oi	*voice*	ua	*assuage*	oy	*joy*
ew	*few*	ie	*Daniel*	ou	*found*	ui	*languid*		
		io	*minion*	ow	*now*				

Consonants.

ba	ca	da	fa	ga	ha	ja	ka	la	ma
na	pa	qua	ra	sa	ta	va	wa	ya	za

Different Sounds of certain Consonants & Double Consonants.

Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in		Sounded as in	
c	*cap*	g	*got*	ïng	*thing*	ṡ	*has*	ti	*christian*
ç	*city*	ġ	*age*	le	*able*	sh	*she*	tion	*nation*
ch	*child*	ng	*long*	re	*acre*	sion	*fusion*	wh	*who*
ch	*machine*			ph	*physick*	th	*the*	ough	*tough*

Mark of Obliteration.

(\) *This mark under a Letter shews that it is not to be pronounced, as* eight *in which* i g h *are not sounded.*

Fębruarẏ ïs cold but thé days ârę lòng; thęrę ïs à yèllow crocus coming up.

Mr. Barbauld's Lessons.

London, Published Jan. 1, 1798, by J. Johnson, St. Paul's Church Yard.

In the quotation from Mrs. Barbauld, at the bottom of the alphabetical tables, there is a ſtroke between the letters b and r in *February*, and between t and h in *there*, to ſhew that theſe letters are to be ſounded together, ſo as to make one ſound. The ſame is to be obſerved as to *(ng)* in the word *long*, and alſo as to the ſyllable *ing*, which in the table No. 4, column 4, is directed to be taught as one ſound. The mark (.) of obliteration is put under (y) in the word *days*, under *e* final in *there*, and alſo under one of the *l*'s, and the (w) in *yellow*, to ſhew that theſe letters are not to be pronounced. The exceptions to this ſcheme of articulation are very few; ſuch as occur are marked with the number employed in Walker's dictionary, to denote the exception, to which excellent work the teacher will of courſe refer.

Parents, at the firſt ſight of this new alphabet, will perhaps tremble leſt they ſhould be obliged to learn the whole of it before they begin to teach their children: but they may calm their apprehenſions, for they need only point out the letters in ſucceſſion to the child, and ſound them as they are ſounded in the words annexed to the letters in the table, and the child will ſoon by repetition render the marks of the reſpective letters familiar to the teacher. We have never found any body complain of difficulty, who has gone on from letter to letter along with the child who was taught.

As ſoon as our pupil knows the different ſounds of (a) combined in ſucceſſion with all the conſonants, we may teach him the reſt of the vowels joined with all the conſonants, which will be a ſhort and eaſy work. Our readers need not be alarmed at the apparent ſlowneſs of this method: ſix months, at the rate of four or five minutes each day, will render all theſe combinations perfectly familiar. One of Mrs. Barbauld's leſſons for young children, carefully

fully marked in the ſame manner as the alphabet, ſhould, when they are well acquainted with the ſounds of each of the vowels with each of the conſonants, be put into our pupil's hands *.

The ſound of three or four letters together will immediately become familiar to him, and when any of the leſs common ſounds of the vowels, ſuch as are contained in the ſecond table, and the terminating ſounds, tion, ly, &c., occur, they ſhould be read to the child, and ſhould be added to what he has got by rote from time to time. When all theſe marks and their correſponding ſounds are learnt, the primer ſhould be abandoned, and from that time the child will be able to read ſlowly the moſt difficult words in the language. We muſt obſerve, that the mark of obliteration is of the greateſt ſervice; it is a clue to the whole labyrinth of intricate and uncouth orthography. The word though, by the obliteration of three letters, may be as eaſily read as the or that.

It ſhould be obſerved that all people, before they can read fluently, have acquired a knowledge of the general appearance of moſt of the words in the language, independently of the ſyllables of which they are compoſed. Seven children in the author's family were taught to read in this manner, and three in the common method; the difference of time, labour, and ſorrow, between the two modes of learning, appeared ſo clearly, that we can ſpeak with confidence upon the ſubject. We think that nine tenths of the labour and diſguſt of learning to read may be ſaved by this method, and that inſtead of frowns and tears, the uſual harbingers

* Some of theſe leſſons, and others by the authors, will ſhortly be printed, and marked according to this method.

of learning, cheerfulneſs and ſmiles may initiate willing pupils in the moſt difficult of all human attainments.

A and H, at four and five years old, after they had learned the alphabet, without having ever combined the letters in ſyllables, were ſet to read one of Mrs. Barbauld's little books: after being employed two or three minutes every day for a fortnight in making out the words of this book, a paper with a few raiſins well concealed in its folds was given to each of them, with theſe words printed on the outſide of it, marked according to our alphabet:

"Open this, and eat what you find in it."

In twenty minutes they read it diſtinctly without any aſſiſtance.

The ſtep from reading with theſe marks, to reading without them, will be found very eaſy. Nothing more is neceſſary, than to give children the ſame books without marks, which they can read fluently with them.

Spelling comes next to reading. New trials for the temper; new perils for the underſtanding; poſitive rules and aribitrary exceptions; endleſs examples and contradictions; till at length, out of all patience with the ſtupid docility of his pupil, the tutor perceives the abſolute neceſſity of making him get by heart with all convenient ſpeed every word in the language. The formidable columns in dread ſucceſſion ariſe a hoſt of foes: two columns a day at leaſt may be conquered. Months and years are devoted to the undertaking; but after going through a whole ſpelling-book, perhaps a whole dictionary, till we come triumphantly to ſpell *Zeugma*,

we have forgotten how to ſpell *Abbot*, and we muſt begin again with *Abaſement*. Merely the learning to ſpell ſo many unconnected words without any aſſiſtance from reaſon or analogy, is nothing compared with the difficulty of learning the explanation of them by rote, and the ſtill greater difficulty of underſtanding the meaning of the explanation. When a child has got by rote

" Midnight, the *depth* of night;"

" Metaphyſics, the ſcience which treats of immaterial beings,
" and of forms in general abſtracted from matter;"

has he acquired any very diſtinct ideas either of midnight or of metaphyſics? If a boy had eaten rice pudding till he fancied himſelf tolerably well acquainted with rice, would he find his knowledge much improved by learning from his ſpelling-book the words

" Rice, a foreign eſculent grain?"

yet we are ſurpriſed to diſcover, that men have ſo few accurate ideas, and that ſo many learned diſputes originate in a confuſed or improper uſe of words.

" All this is very true," ſays a candid ſchoolmaſter; " we ſee " the evil, but we cannot new model the language, or write a " perfect philoſophical dictionary; and, in the mean time, we are " bound to teach children to ſpell, which we do with the leſs re- " luctance, becauſe, though we allow that it is an arduous taſk, we " have found from experience that it can be accompliſhed, and " that the underſtandings of many of our pupils ſurvive all the " perils

"perils to which you think them expoſed during the ope-
"ration."

The underſtandings may, and do ſurvive the operation; but why ſhould they be put in unneceſſary danger? and why ſhould we early diſguſt children with literature by the pain and difficulty of their firſt leſſons? We are convinced, that the buſineſs of learning to ſpell is made much more laborious to children than it need to be: it may be uſeful to give them five or ſix words every day to learn by heart, but more only loads their memory; and we ſhould at firſt ſelect words of which they know the meaning, and which occur moſt frequently in reading or converſation. The alphabetical liſt of words in a ſpelling book contains many which are not in common uſe, and the pupil forgets theſe as faſt as he learns them. We have found it entertaining to children, to aſk them to ſpell any ſhort ſentence as it has been accidentally ſpoken. "Put "this book on that table." Aſk a child how he would ſpell thoſe words if he were obliged to write them down, and you introduce into his mind the idea that he muſt learn to ſpell, before he can make his words and thoughts underſtood in writing. It is a good way to make children write down a few words of their own ſelection every day, and correct the ſpelling; and alſo after they have been reading, whilſt the words are yet freſh in their memory, we may aſk them to ſpell ſome of the words which they have juſt ſeen; by theſe means, and by repeating at different times in the day thoſe words which are moſt frequently wanted, his vocabulary will be pretty well ſtocked without its having coſt him many tears. We ſhould obſerve, that children learn to ſpell more by the eye than by the ear, and that the more they read and write, the more likely they will be to remember the combination of letters in

words which they have continually before their eyes, or which they feel it neceſſary to repreſent to others. When young people begin to write, they firſt feel the uſe of ſpelling, and it is then that they will learn it with moſt eaſe and preciſion. Then the greateſt care ſhould be taken to look over their writing, and to make them correct every word in which they have made a miſtake; becauſe bad habits of ſpelling, once contracted, can ſcarcely be cured: the underſtanding has nothing to do with the buſineſs, and when the memory is puzzled between the rules of ſpelling right, and the habits of ſpelling wrong, it becomes a misfortune to the pupil to write even a common letter. The ſhame which is annexed to bad ſpelling excites young people's attention, as ſoon as they are able to underſtand, that it is conſidered as a mark of ignorance and ill breeding. We have often obſerved, that children liſten with anxiety to the remarks that are made upon this ſubject in their preſence, eſpecially when the letters or notes of *grown up people* are criticiſed.

Some time ago, a lady, who was reading a newſpaper, met with a ſtory of an ignorant magiſtrate, who gave for his toaſt at a public dinner the two Ks, for the King and Conſtitution. "How very "much aſhamed the man muſt have felt when all the people "laughed at him for his miſtake! they muſt all have ſeen that "he did not know how to ſpell; and what a diſgrace for a magiſ-"trate too!" ſaid a boy who heard the anecdote. It made a ſerious impreſſion upon him; a few months afterwards, he was employed by his father in an occupation which was extremely agreeable to him, but in which he continually felt the neceſſity of ſpelling correctly. He was employed to ſend meſſages by a telegraph; theſe meſſages he was obliged to write down haſtily in little

tle

tle journals kept for the purpoſe; and as theſe were ſeen by ſeveral people when the buſineſs of the day came to be reviewed, the boy had a conſiderable motive for orthographical exactneſs. He became extremely deſirous to teach himſelf, and conſequently his ſucceſs was from that moment certain. As to the reſt, we refer to Lady Carliſle's comprehenſive maxim, "Spell well if you can."

It is undoubtedly of conſequence to teach the rudiments of literary education early, to get over the firſt difficulties of reading, writing, and ſpelling; but much of the anxiety, and buſtle, and labour of teaching theſe things may be advantageouſly ſpared. If more attention were turned to the general cultivation of the underſtanding, and if more pains were taken to make literature agreeable to children, there would be found leſs difficulty to excite them to mental exertion, or to induce the habits of perſevering application.

When we ſpeak of rendering literature agreeable to children, and of the danger of aſſociating pain with the ſight of a book, or with the ſound of the word *taſk*, we ſhould at the ſame time avoid the error of thoſe who in their firſt leſſons accuſtom their pupils to ſo much amuſement, that they cannot help afterwards feeling diſguſted with the ſobriety of inſtruction. It has been the faſhion of late to attempt teaching every thing to children in play, and ingenious people have contrived to inſinuate much uſeful knowledge without betraying the deſign to inſtruct; but this ſyſtem cannot be purſued beyond certain bounds without many inconveniencies. The habit of being amuſed not only increaſes the deſire for amuſement, but it leſſens even the reliſh for pleaſure; ſo that the mind becomes paſſive and indolent, and a courſe of perpetually increaſing

ſtimulus

ſtimulus is neceſſary to awaken attention. When diſſipated habits are acquired, the pupil loſes power over his own mind, and, inſtead of vigorous voluntary exertion, which he ſhould be able to command, he ſhews that wayward imbecility, which can think ſucceſsfully only by fits and ſtarts: this paralytic ſtate of mind has been found to be one of the greateſt calamities attendant on what is called genius; and injudicious education creates or increaſes this diſeaſe. Let us not therefore humour children in this capricious temper, eſpecially if they have quick abilities: let us give rewards proportioned to their exertions with uniform juſtice, but let us not grant bounties in education, which, however they may appear to ſucceed in effecting partial and temporary purpoſes, are not calculated to enſure any conſequences permanently beneficial. The truth is, that uſeful knowledge cannot be obtained without labour, that attention long continued is laborious, but that without this labour nothing excellent can be accompliſhed. Excite a child to attend in earneſt for a ſhort time, his mind will be leſs fatigued, and his underſtanding will be more improved, than if he had exerted but half the energy twice as long: the degree of pain which he may have felt will be amply and properly compenſated by his ſucceſs; this will not be an arbitrary variable reward, but one within his own power, and that can be aſcertained by his own feelings. Here is no deceit practiſed, no illuſion; the ſame courſe of conduct may be regularly purſued through the whole of his education, and his confidence in his tutor will progreſſively increaſe. On the contrary, if, to entice him to enter the paths of knowledge, we ſtrew them with flowers, how will he feel when he muſt force his way through thorns and briars?

There is a material difference between teaching children in play,

play, and making learning a taſk; in the one caſe we aſſociate factitious pleaſure, in the other factitious pain, with the object: both produce pernicious effects upon the temper, and retard the natural progreſs of the underſtanding. The advocates in favour of "ſcholaſtic badinage" have urged, that it excites an intereſt in the minds of children ſimilar to that which makes them endure a conſiderable degree of labour in the purſuit of their amuſements. Children, it is ſaid, work hard at play, therefore we ſhould let them play at work. Would not this produce effects the very reverſe of what we deſire? The whole queſtion muſt at laſt depend upon the meaning of the word play: if by play be meant every thing that is not uſually called a taſk, then undoubtedly much may be learned at play; if, on the contrary, we mean by the expreſſion to deſcribe that ſtate of fidgetting idleneſs, or of boiſterous activity, in which the intellectual powers are torpid, or ſtunned with unmeaning noiſe, the aſſertion contradicts itſelf. At play ſo defined children can learn nothing but bodily activity; it is certainly true, that when children are intereſted about any thing, whether it be about what we call a trifle, or a matter of conſequence, they will exert themſelves in order to ſucceed; but from the moment the attention is fixed, no matter on what, children are no longer at idle play, they are at active work.

S——, a little boy of nine years old, was ſtanding without any book in his hand, and ſeemingly idle; he was amuſing himſelf with looking at what he called a rainbow upon the floor: he begged his ſiſter M—— to look at it; then he ſaid he wondered what could make it; how it came there. The ſun ſhone bright through the window; the boy moved ſeveral things in the room, ſo as to place them ſometimes between the light and the colours which he

ſaw

ſaw upon the floor, and ſometimes in a corner of the room where the ſun did not ſhine. As he moved the things he ſaid, "This is "not it;" "Nor this;" "This hasn't any thing to do with it." At laſt he found, that when he moved a tumbler of water out of the place where it ſtood, his rainbow vaniſhed. Some violets were in the tumbler; S—— thought they might be the cauſe of the colours which he ſaw upon the floor, or, as he expreſſed it, "Per-"haps theſe may be the thing." He took the violets out of the water; the colours remained upon the floor. He then thought that "it might be the water." He emptied the glaſs; the colours remained, but they were fainter. S—— immediately obſerved, that it was the water and glaſs together that made the rainbow. "But," ſaid he, "there is no glaſs in the ſky, yet there is a rainbow, "ſo that I think the water alone would do, if we could but hold "it together without the glaſs. Oh I know how I can manage." He poured the water ſlowly out of the tumbler into a baſon, which he placed where the ſun ſhone, and he ſaw the colours on the floor twinkling behind the water as it fell: this delighted him much; but he aſked why it would not do when the ſun did not ſhine. The ſun went behind a cloud whilſt he was trying his experiments: "There was light," ſaid he, "though there was no ſun-"ſhine." He then ſaid he thought that the different thickneſs of the glaſs was the cauſe of the variety of colours: afterwards he ſaid he thought that the clearneſs or muddineſs of the different drops of water was the cauſe of the different colours.

A rigid preceptor, who thinks that every boy muſt be idle who has not a Latin book conſtantly in his hand, would perhaps have reprimanded S—— for waſting his time *at play*, and would have ſummoned him from his rainbow to his *talk*; but it is very ob-

vious

vious to any perſon free from prejudices, that this child was not idle whilſt he was meditating upon the rainbow on the floor; his attention was fixed; he was reaſoning, he was trying experiments. We may call this *play* if we pleaſe, and we may ſay that Deſcartes was at play, when he firſt verified Antonio De Dominis biſhop of Spalatro's treatiſe of the rainbow, by an experiment with a glaſs globe *: and we may ſay that Buffon was idle, when his pleaſed attention was firſt caught with a landſcape of green ſhadows, when one evening at ſunſet he firſt obſerved that the ſhadows of trees which fell upon a white wall were green, when he was firſt delighted with the exact repreſentation of a green arbour, which ſeemed as if it had been newly painted on the wall. Certainly the boy with his rainbow on the floor was as much amuſed as the philoſopher with his coloured ſhadows; and, however high ſounding the name of Antonio De Dominis, biſhop of Spalatro, it does not alter the buſineſs in the leaſt; he could have exerted only his *utmoſt attention* upon the theory of the rainbow, and the child did the ſame. We do not mean to compare the powers of reaſoning, or the abilities of the child and the philoſopher, we would only ſhew that the ſame ſpecies of attention was exerted by both.

To fix the attention of children, or, in other words, to intereſt them about thoſe ſubjects to which we wiſh them to apply, muſt be our firſt object in the early cultivation of the underſtanding. This we ſhall not find a difficult undertaking if we have no falſe aſſociations, no painful recollections to contend with. We can connect any ſpecies of knowledge with thoſe occupations which are

* See Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Viſion, vol. i. p. 51.

immediately agreeable to young people: for inſtance, if a child is building a houſe, we may take that opportunity to teach him how bricks are made, how the arches over doors and windows are made, the nature of the keyſtone and butments of an arch, the manner in which all the different parts of the roof of a houſe are put together, &c.: whilſt he is learning all this he is eagerly and ſeriouſly attentive, and we educate his underſtanding in the beſt poſſible method; but if, miſtaking the application of the principle, that literature ſhould be made agreeable to children, we ſhould entice a child to learn his letters by a promiſe of a gilt coach, or by telling him that he would be the clevereſt boy in the world if he could but learn the letter *A*, we uſe falſe and fooliſh motives; we may poſſibly by ſuch means effect the immediate purpoſe, but we ſhall aſſuredly have reaſon to repent of ſuch imprudent deceit. If the child reaſons at all, he will be content after his firſt leſſon with being "the clevereſt boy in the world," and he will not on a future occaſion hazard his fame, having much to loſe, and nothing to gain; beſides, he is now maſter of a gilt coach, and ſome new and larger reward muſt be proffered to excite his induſtry. Beſides the diſadvantage of early exhauſting our ſtock of incitements, it is dangerous in teaching to humour pupils with a variety of objects by way of relieving their attention: the pleaſure of *thinking*, and much of the profit, muſt frequently depend upon our preſerving the greateſt poſſible connexion between our ideas; thoſe who allow themſelves to ſtart from one object to another, acquire ſuch diſſipated habits of mind, that they cannot, without extreme difficulty and reluctance, follow any connected train of thought. You cannot teach thoſe who will not follow the chain of your reaſons; upon the connexion of our ideas uſeful memory and reaſoning muſt depend. We will give you an inſtance: arithmetic is one of the firſt things that we attempt

attempt to teach children. In the following dialogue, which paſſed between a boy of five years old and his father, we may obſerve that till the child followed his father's train of ideas he could not be taught.

Father. S——, how many can you take from one?

S——. None.

Father. None! Think; can you take nothing from one?

S——. None, except that one.

Father. Except! Then you can take one from one?

S——. Yes, *that one.*

Father. How many then can you take from one?

S——. One.

Father. Very true; but now, can you take two from one?

S——. Yes, if they were figures I could, with a rubber-out. (This child had frequently ſums written for him with a black lead pencil, and he uſed to rub out his figures when they were wrong with Indian rubber, which he had heard called *rubber-out.)*

Father. Yes, you could; but now we will not talk of figures,

we will talk of things. There may be one horſe or two horſes, or one man or two men.

S——. Yes, or one coat or two coats.

Father. Yes, or one thing or two things, no matter what they are. Now, could you take two things from one thing?

S——. Yes, if there were three things I could take away two things, and leave one.

Father took up a cake from the tea-table.

Father. Could I take two cakes from this one cake?

S——. You could take two pieces.

Father divided the cake into halves, and held up each half ſo that the child might diſtinctly ſee them.

Father. What would you call theſe two pieces?

S——. Two cakes.

Father. No, not two cakes.

S——. Two biſcuits.

Father holding up a whole biſcuit. What is this?

S——.

S——. A thing to eat.

Father. Yes, but what would you call it?

S——. A biſcuit.

Father broke it into halves, and ſhewed one half.

Father. What would you call this?

S—— was ſilent, and his ſiſter was applied to, who anſwered, "Half a biſcuit."

Father. Very well; that's all at preſent.

The father prudently ſtopped here, that he might not confuſe his pupil's underſtanding. Thoſe only who have attempted to teach children can conceive how extremely difficult it is to fix their attention, or to make them ſeize the connexion of ideas, which it appears to us almoſt impoſſible to miſs. Children are well occupied in examining external objects, but they muſt alſo attend to words as well as things. One of the great difficulties in early inſtruction ariſes from the want of words: the pupil very often has acquired the neceſſary ideas, but they are not aſſociated in his mind with the words which his tutor uſes; theſe words are then to him mere ſounds, which ſuggeſt no correſpondent thoughts. Words, as M. Condillac well obſerves *, are eſſential to our acquiſition of knowledge; they are the medium through which one ſet of beings

* "Art de Penſer."

can

can convey the result of their experiments and observations to another; they are in all mental processes the algebraic signs which assist us in solving the most difficult problems. What agony does a foreigner, knowing himself to be a man of sense, appear to suffer, when, for want of language, he cannot in conversation communicate his knowledge, explain his reasons, enforce his arguments, or make his wit intelligible? In vain he has recourse to the language of action. The language of action, or, as Bacon calls it, of "transitory hieroglyphic," is expressive, but inadequate. As new ideas are collected in the mind, new signs are wanted, and the progress of the understanding would be early and fatally impeded by the want of language. M. de la Condamine tells us that there is a nation who have no sign to express the number three but this word, *poellartarrorincourac*. These people having begun, as Condillac observes, in such an incommodious manner, it is not surprising that they have not advanced farther in their knowledge of arithmetic: they have got no farther than the number three; their knowledge of arithmetic stops for ever at *poellartarrorincourac*. But even this cumbersome sign is better than none. Those who have the misfortune to be born deaf and dumb continue for ever in intellectual imbecility. There is an account in the Memoires de l'Academie Royale, p. xxii—xviii. 1703, of a young man born deaf and dumb*, who recovered his hearing at the age of four and twenty, and who, after employing himself in repeating low to himself the words which he heard others pronounce, at length broke silence in company, and declared that he could talk. His conversation was but imperfect; he was examined by several able theolo-

* See Condillac's Art de Penser. In the chapter "on the use of signs" this young man is mentioned.

gians,

gians, who chiefly queſtioned him on his ideas of God, the ſoul, and the morality or immorality of actions. It appeared that he had not thought upon any of theſe ſubjects; he did not diſtinctly know what was meant by death, and he never thought of it. He ſeemed to paſs a merely animal life, occupied with ſenſible, preſent objects, and with the few ideas which he received by his ſenſe of ſight; nor did he ſeem to have gained as much knowledge as he might have done by the compariſon of theſe ideas, yet it is ſaid that he did not appear naturally deficient in underſtanding.

Peter the wild boy, who is mentioned in Lord Monboddo's Origin of Language *, had all his ſenſes in remarkable perfection. He lived at a farm houſe within half a mile of us in Hertfordſhire for ſome years, and we had frequent opportunities of trying experiments upon him. He could articulate imperfectly a few words, in particular, *King George*, which words he always accompanied with an imitation of the bells, which rang at the coronation of George the Second; he could in a rude manner imitate two or three common tunes, but without words. Though his head, as Mr. Wedgewood and many others had remarked, reſembled that of Socrates, he was an idiot: he had acquired a few automatic habits of rationality and induſtry, but he could never be made to work at any continued occupation; he would ſhut the door of the farm-yard five hundred times a day, but he would not reap or make hay. Drawing water from a neighbouring river was the only domeſtic buſineſs which he regularly purſued. In 1779 we viſited him, and tried the following experiment. He was attended to the river by a perſon who emptied his buckets repeatedly after Peter had repeatedly filled

* Vol. II.

them.

them. A ſhilling was put before his face into one of the buckets when it was empty; he took no notice of it, but filled it with water and carried it homeward: his buckets were taken from him before he reached the houſe and emptied on the ground; the ſhilling, which had fallen out, was again ſhewn to him, and put into the bucket. Peter returned to the river again, filled his bucket and went home; and when the bucket was emptied by the maid at the houſe where he lived, he took the ſhilling and laid it in a place where he was accuſtomed to depoſit the preſents that were made to him by curious ſtrangers, and whence the farmer's wife collected the price of his daily exhibition.

Rouſſeau declaims with eloquence, and often with juſtice, againſt what he calls a knowledge of words. Words without correſpondent ideas are worſe than uſeleſs, they are counterfeit coin, which impoſes upon the ignorant and unwary; but words, which really repreſent ideas, are not only of current uſe, but of ſterling value; they not only ſhew our preſent ſtore, but they increaſe our wealth by keeping it in continual circulation; both the principal and the intereſt increaſe together. The importance of ſigns and words in our reaſonings has been eloquently explained, ſince the time of Condillac, by Stewart. We muſt uſe the ideas of theſe excellent writers, becauſe they are juſt and applicable to the art of education; but whilſt we uſe, it is with proper acknowledgments that we borrow, what we ſhall never be able to return.

It is a nice and difficult thing in education to proportion a child's vocabulary exactly to his knowledge, diſpoſitions, or conformation; our management muſt vary; ſome will acquire words too quickly, others too ſlowly. A child who has great facility in pronouncing ſounds,

ſounds, will for that reaſon quickly acquire a number of words, whilſt thoſe whoſe organs of ſpeech are not ſo happily formed, will from that cauſe alone be leſs ready in forming a copious vocabulary. Children who have many companions, or who live with people who converſe a great deal, have more motive, both from ſympathy and emulation, to acquire a variety of words, than thoſe can have who live with ſilent people, and who have few companions of their own age. All theſe circumſtances ſhould be conſidered by parents, before they form their judgment of a child's capacity from his volubility or his taciturnity. Volubility can eaſily be checked by ſimply ceaſing to attend to it, and taciturnity may be vanquiſhed by the encouragements of praiſe and affection: we ſhould neither be alarmed at one diſpoſition or at the other, but ſteadily purſue the ſyſtem of conduct which will be moſt advantageous to both. When a prattling vivacious child pours forth a multiplicity of words without underſtanding their meaning, we may ſometimes beg to have an explanation of a few of them, and the child will then be obliged to think, which will prevent him from talking nonſenſe another time. When a thoughtful boy, who is in the habit of obſerving every object he ſees, is at a loſs for words to expreſs his ideas, his countenance uſually ſhews to thoſe who can read the countenance of children, that he is not ſtupid; therefore we need not urge him to talk, but aſſiſt him judiciouſly with words "in his utmoſt need:" at the ſame time we ſhould obſerve carefully, whether he grows lazy when we aſſiſt him; if his ſtock of words does not increaſe in proportion to the aſſiſtance we give, we ſhould then ſtimulate him to exertion, or elſe he will become habitually indolent in expreſſing his ideas; though he may *think* in a language of his own, he will not be able to underſtand

our language when we attempt to teach him: this would be a ſource of daily miſery to both parties.

When children begin to read, they ſeem ſuddenly to acquire a great variety of words; we ſhould carefully examine whether they annex the proper meaning to theſe which are ſo rapidly collected. Inſtead of giving them leſſons and taſks to get by rote, we ſhould cautiouſly watch over every new phraſe and every new word which they learn from books. There are but few books ſo written that young children can comprehend a ſingle ſentence in them without much explanation. It is tireſome to thoſe who hear them read to explain every word; it is not only tireſome but difficult; beſides, the progreſs of the pupil ſeems to be retarded; the grand buſineſs of reading, of getting through the book is impeded; and the tutor, more impatient than his pupil, ſays, "Read on, I cannot "ſtop to explain *that* to you now. You will underſtand the mean- "ing of the ſentence if you will read to the end of the page. You "have not read three lines this half hour; we ſhall never get on "at this rate."

A certain dame at a country ſchool, who had never been able to compaſs the word Nebuchadnezzar, uſed to deſire her pupils to "call it Nazareth, and let it paſs."

If they be obliged to paſs over words without comprehending them in books, they will probably do the ſame in converſation; and the difficulty of teaching ſuch pupils, and of underſtanding what they ſay, will be equally increaſed. At the hazard of being tedious we muſt dwell a little longer upon this ſubject, becauſe much

much of the future capacity of children ſeems to depend upon the manner in which they firſt acquire language. If their language be confuſed, ſo will be their thoughts; and they will not be able to reaſon, to invent, or to write, with more preciſion and accuracy than they ſpeak. The firſt words that children learn are the names of things; theſe are eaſily aſſociated with the objects themſelves, and there is little danger of miſtake or confuſion. We will not enter into the grammatical diſpute concerning the right of precedency amongſt pronoun ſubſtantives and verbs; we do not know which came firſt into the mind of man; perhaps, in different minds, and in different circumſtances, the precedency muſt have varied; but this ſeems to be of little conſequence: children ſee actions performed, and they act themſelves; when they want to expreſs their remembrance of theſe actions, they make uſe of the ſort of words which we call verbs. Let theſe words be ſtrictly aſſociated with the ideas which they mean to expreſs, and no matter whether children know any thing about the diſputes of grammarians, they will underſtand rational grammar in due time, ſimply by reflecting upon their own minds. This we ſhall explain more fully when we ſpeak hereafter of grammar; we juſt mention the ſubject here, to warn preceptors againſt puzzling their pupils too early with grammatical ſubtleties.

If any perſon unuſed to mechanics was to read Dr. Deſagulier's deſcription of the manner in which a man walks, the number of a-b-cs, and the travels of the center of gravity, would ſo amaze and confound him, that he would ſcarcely believe he could ever again perform ſuch a tremendous operation as that of walking. Children, if they were early to hear grammarians talk of the parts of ſpeech, and of ſyntax, would conclude, that to ſpeak muſt be

one of the moſt difficult arts in the world: but children, who are not uſually ſo unfortunate as to have grammarians for their preceptors when they firſt begin to ſpeak, acquire language without being aware of the difficulties which would appear ſo formidable in theory. A child points to, or touches, the table, and when the word table is repeated, at the ſame inſtant he learns the name of the thing. The facility with which a number of names are thus learned in infancy is ſurpriſing, but we muſt not imagine that the child in learning theſe names has acquired much knowledge; he has prepared himſelf to be taught, but he has not yet learnt any thing accurately. When a child ſees a guinea and a ſhilling, and ſmiling ſays, "That's a guinea, mamma! and that's a ſhilling!" the mother is pleaſed and ſurpriſed by her ſon's intelligence, and ſhe gives him credit for more than he really poſſeſſes. We have aſſociated with the words guinea and ſhilling a number of ideas, and when we hear the ſame words pronounced by a young child, we perhaps have ſome confuſed belief that he has acquired the ſame ideas that we have; hence we are pleaſed with the mere ſound of words of high import from infantine lips.

Children who are delighted in their turn by the expreſſion of pleaſure in the countenance of others, repeat the things which they perceive have pleaſed; and thus their education is begun by thoſe who firſt ſmile upon them, and liſten to them when they attempt to ſpeak. They who applaud children for knowing the names of things, induce them quickly to learn a number of names by rote: as long as they learn the names of external objects only, which they can ſee, and ſmell, and touch, all is well; the names will convey diſtinct ideas of certain perceptions. A child who learns the name of a taſte, or of a colour, who learns that the taſte of ſugar

is

is called ſweet, and that the colour of a red roſe is called red, has learned diſtinct words to expreſs certain perceptions; and we can at any future time recall to his mind the memory of thoſe perceptions by means of their names, and he underſtands us as well as the moſt learned philoſopher. But, ſuppoſe that a boy had learned only the name of gold; that when different metals were ſhewn to him, he could put his finger upon gold, and ſay, "That is "gold;" yet this boy does not know all the properties of gold, he does not know in what it differs from other metals, to what uſes it is applied in arts, manufactures, and commerce; the name of gold in his mind repreſents nothing more than a ſubſtance of a bright yellow colour, upon which people, he does not preciſely know why, ſet a great value. Now, it is very poſſible that a child might, on the contrary, learn all the properties, and the various uſes of gold, without having learned its name; his ideas of this metal would be perfectly diſtinct, but whenever he wiſhed to ſpeak of gold, he would be obliged to uſe a vaſt deal of circumlocution to make himſelf underſtood; and if he were to enumerate all the properties of the metal every time he wanted to recall the general idea, his converſation would be intolerably tedious to others, and to himſelf this uſeleſs repetition muſt be extremely laborious. He would certainly be glad to learn that ſingle word *gold*, which would ſave him ſo much trouble; his underſtanding would appear ſuddenly to have improved, ſimply from his having acquired a proper ſign to repreſent his ideas. The boy who had learnt the name, without knowing any of the properties of gold, would alſo appear comparatively ignorant, as ſoon as it is diſcovered that he has few ideas annexed to the word. It is, perhaps, for this reaſon, that ſome children ſeem ſuddenly to ſhine out with knowledge, which no one ſuſpected they poſſeſſed; whilſt others who had appeared to be very

very quick and clever come to a dead ſtop in their education, and appear to be blighted by ſome unknown cauſe. The children who ſuddenly ſhine out, are thoſe who had acquired a number of ideas, and who the moment they acquire proper words can communicate their thoughts to others. Thoſe children who ſuddenly ſeem to loſe their ſuperiority, are thoſe who had acquired a variety of words, but who had not annexed ideas to them; when their ignorance is detected, we not only deſpair of them, but they are apt to deſpair of themſelves; they ſee their companions get before them, and they do not exactly perceive the cauſe of their ſudden incapacity. Where we ſpeak of ſenſible, viſible, tangible objects, we can eaſily detect and remedy a child's ignorance. It is eaſy to diſcover whether he has or has not a complete notion of ſuch a ſubſtance as gold; we can enumerate its properties, and readily point out in what his definition is defective. The ſubſtance can be eaſily produced for examination; moſt of its properties are obvious to the ſenſes; we have nothing to do but to ſhew them to the child, and to aſſociate with each property its uſual name: here there can be no danger of puzzling his underſtanding; but when we come to the explanation of words which do not repreſent external objects, we ſhall find the affair more difficult. We can make children underſtand the meaning of thoſe words which are the names of ſimple feelings of the mind, ſuch as ſurprize, joy, grief, pity; becauſe we can either put our pupils in ſituations where they actually feel theſe ſenſations, and then we may aſſociate the name with the feeling; or we may, by the example of other people who actually ſuffer pain or enjoy pleaſure, point out what we mean by the words joy and grief. But how ſhall we explain to our young pupils a number of words which repreſent neither exiſting ſubſtances nor ſimple feelings, when we can neither recur to experiment

experiment nor to ſympathy for aſſiſtance? How ſhall we explain, for inſtance, the words virtue, juſtice, benevolence, beauty, taſte, &c.? To analyſe our own ideas of theſe is no eaſy taſk; to explain the proceſs to a young child is ſcarcely poſſible. Call upon any man who has read and reflected, for a definition of virtue, the whole "theory of moral ſentiments" riſes perhaps to his view at once in all its elegance; the paradoxical acumen of Mandeville, the perſpicuous reaſoning of Hume, the accurate metaphyſics of Condillac, the perſuaſive eloquence of Stewart; all the various doctrines that have been ſupported concerning the foundation of morals, ſuch as the fitneſs of things, the moral ſenſe, the beauty of truth, utility, ſympathy, common ſenſe; all that has been ſaid by ancient and modern philoſophers, is recalled in tranſient perplexing ſucceſſion to his memory. If ſuch be the ſtate of mind of the man who is to define, what muſt be the condition of the child who is to underſtand the definition? All that a prudent perſon will attempt, is to give inſtances of different virtues; but even theſe it will be difficult properly to ſelect for a child. General terms, whether in morals or in natural philoſophy, ſhould, we apprehend, be as much as poſſible avoided in early education. Some people may imagine that children have improved in virtue and wiſdom when they can talk fluently of juſtice, and charity, and humanity; when they can read with a good emphaſis any didactic compoſitions in verſe or proſe: but let any perſon of ſober common ſenſe be allowed to croſs-examine theſe proficients, and the pretended extent of their knowledge will ſhrink into a narrow compaſs; nor will their virtues, which have never ſeen ſervice, be ready for action.

General terms are, as it were, but the indorſements upon the bundles of our ideas; they are uſeful to thoſe who have collected

a number of ideas, but utterly uſeleſs to thoſe who have no collections ready for claſſification: nor ſhould we be in a hurry to tie up the bundles, till we are ſure that the collection is tolerably complete; the trouble, the difficulty, the ſhame of untying them late in life is felt even by ſuperior minds. "Sir," ſaid Dr. Johnſon, "I don't like to have any of my opinions attacked. I have "made up my faggot, and if you draw out one you weaken the "whole bundle."

Preceptors ſometimes explain general terms and abſtract notions vaguely to their pupils, ſimply, becauſe they are aſhamed to make that anſwer which every ſenſible perſon muſt frequently make to a child's inquiries. "I don't know *." Surely it is much better to ſay at once, "I cannot explain this to you," than to attempt an imperfect or ſophiſtical reply. Fortunately for us, children, if they are not forced to attend to ſtudies for which they have no taſte, will not trouble us much with moral and metaphyſical queſtions; their attention will be fully employed upon external objects; intent upon experiments, they will not be very inquiſitive about theories. Let us then take care that their ſimple ideas be accurate, and when theſe are compounded, their complex notions, their principles, opinions, and taſtes, will neceſſarily be juſt; their language will then be as accurate as their ideas are diſtinct; and hence they will be enabled to reaſon with preciſion, and to invent with facility. We may obſerve, that the great difficulty in reaſoning is to fix ſteadily upon our terms; ideas can be readily compared, when the words by which we expreſs them are defined; as in arithmetic and algebra, we can eaſily ſolve any problem, when we

* Rouſſeau.

have

have preciſe ſigns for all the numbers and quantities which are to be conſidered.

It is not from idleneſs, it is not from ſtupidity, it is not from obſtinacy, that children frequently ſhew an indiſpoſition to liſten to thoſe who attempt to explain things to them. The exertion of attention, which is frequently required from them, is too great for the patience of childhood: the words that are uſed are ſo inaccurate in their ſignification, that they convey to the mind ſometimes one idea and ſometimes another; we might as well require of them to caſt up a ſum right whilſt we rubbed out and changed the figures every inſtant, as expect that they ſhould ſeize a combination of ideas preſented to them in variable words. Whoever expects to command the attention of an intelligent child, muſt be extremely careful in the uſe of words. If the pupil be paid for the labour of liſtening by the pleaſure of underſtanding what is ſaid, he will attend, whether it be to his playfellow, or to his tutor, to converſation, or to books. But if he has by fatal experience diſcovered, that, let him liſten ever ſo intently, he cannot underſtand, he will ſpare himſelf the trouble of fruitleſs exertion; and, though he may put on a face of attention, his thoughts will wander far from his tutor and his taſks.

"It is impoſſible to fix the attention of children," exclaims the tutor; "when this boy attends he can do any thing, but he will "not attend for a ſingle inſtant."

Alas! it is in vain to ſay he *will not* attend, he *cannot*.

CHAPTER III.

ON ATTENTION.

PERE BOURGEOIS, one of the miſſionaries to China, attempted to preach a Chineſe ſermon to the Chineſe. His own account of the buſineſs is the beſt we can give.

" They told me *Chou* ſignifies a book, ſo that I thought when-
" ever the word *Chou* was pronounced a book was the ſubject of
" diſcourſe; not at all. Chou, the next time I heard it, I found
" ſignified *a tree.* Now I was to recollect Chou was a book, and
" a tree; but this amounted to nothing. Chou I found alſo ex-
" preſſed *great heats.* Chou is *to relate.* Chou is *the Aurora.* Chou
" means *to be accuſtomed.* Chou expreſſes the *loſs of a wager*, &c.
" I ſhould never have done were I to enumerate all its mean-
" ings * * * * * * * * * *.

" I recited my ſermon at leaſt fifty times to my ſervant before
" I ſpoke it in public, and yet I am told, though he continually
" corrected me, that of the ten parts of the ſermon (as the Chi-
" neſe expreſs themſelves) they hardly underſtood three. Fortu-
" nately the Chineſe are wonderfully patient."

Children are ſometimes in the condition in which the Chineſe found themſelves at this learned miſſionary's ſermon, and their patience deſerves to be equally commended. The difficulty of underſtanding the Chineſe Chou ſtrikes us immediately, and we ſympathiſe with Pere Bourgeois's perplexity; yet many words, which are in common uſe amongſt us, may perhaps be as puzzling to children. *Block*, (ſee Johnſon's Dictionary) ſignifies *a heavy piece of timber, a maſs of matter.* Block means *the wood on which hats are formed.* Block means *the wood on which criminals are beheaded.* Block is *a ſea-term for a pulley.* Block is *an obſtruction, a ſtop*; and, finally, Block means *a blockhead.*

There are in our language ten meanings for *ſweet*, ten for *open*, twenty-two for *upon*, and ſixty-three for *to fall.* Such are the defects of language! But, whatever they may be, we cannot hope immediately to ſee them reformed, becauſe common conſent, and univerſal cuſtom, muſt combine to eſtabliſh a new vocabulary. None but philoſophers could invent, and none but philoſophers would adopt, a philoſophical language. The new philoſophical language of chemiſtry was received at firſt with ſome reluctance, even by chemiſts, notwithſtanding its obvious utility and elegance. Butter of antimony, and liver of ſulphur, flowers of zinc, oil of vitriol, and ſpirit of ſulphur by the bell, powder of algaroth, and ſalt of alembroth, may yet long retain their ancient titles amongſt apothecaries. There does not exiſt in the mineral kingdom either butter or oil, or yet flowers; theſe treacherous names * are given to the moſt violent poiſons, ſo that there is no analogy to guide the underſtanding or the memory: but Cuſtom has a preſcriptive right

* V. Preface to Berthollet's Chemical Nomenclature.

to

to talk nonſenſe. The barbarous enigmatical jargon of the ancient adepts continued for above a century to be the only chemical language of men of ſcience, notwithſtanding the prodigious labour to the memory, and confuſion to the underſtanding, which it occaſioned: they have but juſt now left off calling one of their veſſels for diſtilling a death's head, and another a helmet. Capricious analogy with difficulty yields to rational arrangement. If ſuch has been the ſlow progreſs of a philoſophical language amongſt the learned, how can we expect to make a general, or even a partial reformation amongſt the ignorant? And it may be aſked, how can we in education attempt to teach in any but cuſtomary terms? There is no occaſion to make any ſudden or violent alteration in language, but a man who attempts to teach will find it neceſſary to ſelect his terms with care, to define them with accuracy, and to abide by them with ſteadineſs; thus he will make a philoſophical vocabulary for himſelf. Perſons who want to puzzle and to deceive, always purſue a contrary practice; they uſe as great a variety of unmeaning, or of ambiguous words, as they poſſibly can *. That ſtate juggler, Oliver Cromwell, excelled in this ſpecies of eloquence; his ſpeeches are models in their kind. Count Caglioſtro, and the Counteſs de la Motte, were not his ſuperiors in the power of baffling the underſtanding. The ancient oracles, and the old books of judicial aſtrologers, and of alchemiſts, were contrived upon the ſame principles; in all theſe we are confounded by a multiplicity of words which convey a doubtful ſenſe.

Children, who have not the habit of liſtening to words without underſtanding them, yawn and writhe with manifeſt ſymptoms of

* V. Condillac's "Art de Penſer."

diſguſt,

diſguſt, whenever they are compelled to hear ſounds which convey no ideas to their minds. All ſupernumerary words ſhould be avoided in cultivating the power of attention.

The common obſervation, that we can attend to but one thing at a time, ſhould never be forgotten by thoſe who expect to ſucceed in the art of teaching. In teaching new terms, or new ideas, we muſt not produce a number at once. It is prudent to conſider, that the actual progreſs made in our buſineſs at one ſitting is not of ſo much conſequence, as the deſire left in the pupil's mind to ſit again. Now a child will be better pleaſed with himſelf, and with his tutor, if he acquire one diſtinct idea from a leſſon, than if he retain a confuſed notion of twenty different things. Some people imagine, that as children appear averſe to repetition, variety will amuſe them. Variety to a certain degree certainly relieves the mind, but then the objects which are varied muſt not all be entirely new. Novelty and variety joined fatigue the mind. Either we remain paſſive at the ſhow, or elſe we fatigue ourſelves with ineffectual activity.

A few years ago a gentleman * brought two Eſkimauxes to London: he wiſhed to amuſe, and at the ſame time to aſtoniſh them, with the magnificence of the metropolis. For this purpoſe, after having equipped them like Engliſh gentlemen, he took them out one morning to walk through the ſtreets of London. They walked for ſeveral hours in ſilence; they expreſſed neither pleaſure nor admiration at any thing which they ſaw. When their walk was ended, they appeared uncommonly melancholy and ſtupified. As

* Major Cartwright. See his Journal, &c.

ſoon

ſoon as they got home they ſat down with their elbows upon their knees, and hid their faces between their hands. The only words they could be brought to utter were, "Too much ſmoke—too much "noiſe—too much houſes—too much men—too much every "thing!"

Some people who attend public lectures upon natural philoſophy, with the expectation of being much amuſed and inſtructed, go home with ſenſations ſimilar to thoſe of the poor Eſkimauxes; they feel that they have had too much of every thing. The lecturer has not time to explain his terms, or to repeat them till they are diſtinct in the memory of his audience *. To children every mode of inſtruction muſt be hurtful which fatigues attention, therefore a ſkilful preceptor will as much as poſſible avoid the manner of teaching, to which the public lecturer is in ſome degree compelled by his ſituation. A private preceptor, who undertakes the inſtruction of ſeveral pupils in the ſame family, will examine with care the different habits and tempers of his pupils; and he will have full leiſure to adapt his inſtructions peculiarly to each.

There are ſome general obſervations which apply to all underſtandings; theſe we ſhall firſt enumerate, and we may afterwards examine what diſtinctions ſhould be made for pupils of different tempers or diſpoſitions.

Beſides diſtinctneſs and accuracy in the language which we uſe, beſides care to produce but few ideas or terms that are new in our firſt leſſons, we muſt exerciſe attention but during very ſhort pe-

* V. Chapter on Mechanics.

riods.

riods. In the beginning of every ſcience pupils have much laborious work, we ſhould therefore allow them time; we ſhould repreſs our own impatience when they appear to be ſlow in comprehending reaſons, or in ſeizing analogies. We often expect, that thoſe whom we are teaching ſhould know ſome things intuitively, becauſe theſe may have been ſo long known to us that we forget how we learned them. We may from habit learn to paſs with extraordinary velocity from one idea to another. "Some often re-"peated proceſſes of reaſoning or invention," ſays Mr. Stewart, "may be carried on ſo quickly in the mind that we may not be "conſcious of them ourſelves." Yet we eaſily convince ourſelves that this rapid facility of thought is purely the reſult of practice, by obſerving the comparatively ſlow progreſs of our underſtandings in ſubjects to which we have not been accuſtomed: the progreſs of the mind is there ſo ſlow, that we can count every ſtep.

We are diſpoſed to think that thoſe muſt be naturally ſlow and ſtupid, who do not perceive the reſemblances between objects which ſtrike us, we ſay, at the firſt glance. But what we call the firſt glance is frequently the fiftieth; we have got the things completely by heart; all the parts are known to us, and we are at leiſure to compare and judge. A reaſonable preceptor will not expect from his pupil two efforts of attention at the ſame inſtant; he will not require them at once to learn terms by heart, and to compare the objects which thoſe terms repreſent; he will repeat his terms till they are thoroughly fixed in the memory; he will repeat his reaſoning till the chain of ideas is completely formed.

Repetition makes all operations eaſy; even the fatigue of thinking diminiſhes by habit. That we may not increaſe the labour

of the mind unſeaſonably, we ſhould watch for the moment when habit has made one leſſon eaſy, and then we may go forward a new ſtep. In teaching the children at the Houſe of Induſtry at Munich to ſpin, Count Rumford wiſely ordered that they ſhould be made perfect in one motion before any other was ſhown to them: at firſt they were allowed only to move the wheel by the treadle with their feet; when, after ſufficient practice, the foot became perfect in its leſſon, the hands were ſet to work, and the children were allowed to begin to ſpin with coarſe materials. It is ſaid that theſe children made remarkably good ſpinners. Madame de Genlis applied the ſame principle in teaching Adela to play upon the harp *.

In the firſt attempts to learn any new bodily exerciſe, as fencing or dancing, perſons are not certain what muſcles they muſt uſe, and what may be left at reſt; they generally employ thoſe of which they have the moſt ready command, but theſe may not always be thoſe which are really wanted in the new operation. The ſimpleſt thing appears difficult till by practice we have aſſociated the various ſlight motions which ought to be combined; we feel that from want of uſe our motions are not obedient to our will, and to ſupply this defect we exert more ſtrength and activity than is requiſite. "It does not require ſtrength; you need not uſe ſo much force; "you need not take ſo much pains;" we frequently ſay to thoſe who are making the firſt painful awkward attempts at ſome ſimple operation. Can any thing appear more eaſy than knitting, when we look at the dextrous rapid motions of an experienced practitioner? but let a gentleman take up a lady's knitting needles, and knitting appears to him, and to all the ſpectators, one of the moſt

* V. Adela and Theodore.

difficult and laborious operations imaginable. A lady who is learning to work with a tambour needle puts her head down close to the tambour frame, the colour comes into her face, she strains her eyes, all her faculties are exerted, and perhaps she works at the rate of three links a minute. A week afterwards, probably, practice has made the work perfectly easy; the same lady goes rapidly on with her work; she can talk, and laugh, and perhaps even think, whilst she works; she has now discovered that a number of the motions, and a great portion of that attention which she thought necessary to this mighty operation, may be advantageously spared.

In a similar manner in the exercise of our minds upon subjects that are new to us we generally exert more attention than is necessary or serviceable, and we consequently soon fatigue ourselves without any advantage. Children, to whom many subjects are new, are often fatigued by these overstrained and misplaced efforts; in these circumstances a tutor should relieve the attention by introducing indifferent subjects of conversation; he can, by shewing no anxiety himself either in his manner or countenance, relieve his pupil from any apprehension of his displeasure, or of his contempt; he can represent that the object before them is not a matter of life and death; that if the child does not succeed in the first trials he will not be disgraced in the opinion of any his friends; that by perseverance he will certainly conquer the difficulty; that it is of little consequence whether he understands the thing in question to-day or to-morrow: these considerations will calm the overanxious pupil's agitation, and, whether he succeed or not, he will not suffer such a degree of pain as to disgust him in his first attempts.

Besides the command which we by this prudent management

obtain over the pupil's mind, we ſhall alſo prevent him from acquiring any of thoſe awkward geſtures and involuntary motions which are ſometimes practiſed to relieve the pain of attention.

Dr. Darwin obſerves, that when we experience any diſagreeable ſenſations, we endeavour to procure ourſelves temporary relief by motions of thoſe muſcles and limbs which are moſt habitually obedient to our will. This obſervation extends to mental as well as to bodily pain; thus perſons in violent grief wring their hands and convulſe their countenances; thoſe who are ſubject to the petty, but acute miſeries of falſe ſhame, endeavour to relieve themſelves by awkward geſtures and continual motions. A ploughboy, when he is brought into the preſence of thoſe whom he thinks his ſuperiors, endeavours to relieve himſelf from the uneaſy ſenſations of falſe ſhame, by twirling his hat upon his fingers, and by various uncouth geſtures. Men who think a great deal ſometimes acquire habitual awkward geſtures, to relieve the pain of intenſe thought.

When attention firſt becomes irkſome to children, they mitigate the mental pain by wrinkling their brows, or they fidget and put themſelves into ſtrange attitudes. Theſe odd motions, which at firſt are voluntary, after they have been frequently aſſociated with certain ſtates of mind, conſtantly recur involuntarily with thoſe feelings or ideas with which they have been connected. For inſtance, a boy, who has been uſed to buckle and unbuckle his ſhoe when he repeats his leſſon by rote, cannot repeat his leſſon without performing this operation; it becomes a ſort of artificial memory which is neceſſary to prompt his recollective faculty. When children have a *variety* of tricks of this ſort they are of little conſequence,

but when they have acquired a few conſtant and habitual motions, whilſt they think, or repeat, or liſten, theſe ſhould be attended to, and the habits ſhould be broken, otherwiſe theſe young people will appear when they grow up awkward and ridiculous in their manners; and, what is worſe, perhaps their thoughts and abilities will be too much in the power of external circumſtances. Addiſon repreſents with much humour the caſe of a poor man who had the habit of twirling a bit of thread round his finger; the thread was accidentally broken, and the orator ſtood mute.

We once ſaw a gentleman get up to ſpeak in a public aſſembly, provided with a paper of notes written in pencil; during the exordium of his ſpeech he thumbed his notes with inceſſant agitation; when he looked at the paper he found that the words were totally obliterated; he was obliged to apologiſe to his audience, and after much heſitation ſat down abaſhed. A father would be ſorry to ſee his ſon in ſuch a predicament.

To prevent children from acquiring ſuch awkward tricks whilſt they are thinking, we ſhould in the firſt place take care not to make them attend for too long a time together, then the pain of attention will not be ſo violent as to compel them to uſe theſe ſtrange modes of relief. Bodily exerciſe ſhould immediately follow that entire ſtate of reſt, in which our pupils ought to keep themſelves whilſt they attend. The firſt ſymptoms of any awkward trick ſhould be watched: they are eaſily prevented by early care from becoming habitual. If any ſuch tricks have been acquired, and if the pupil cannot exert his attention in common without certain contorſions are permitted, we ſhould attempt the cure either by ſudden ſlight bodily pain, or by a total ſuſpenſion of all the employ-

ments

ments with which theſe bad habits are aſſociated. If a boy could not read without ſwinging his head like a pendulum, we ſhould rather prohibit him from reading for ſome time, than ſuffer him to grow up with this ridiculous habit. But in converſation, whenever opportunities occur of telling him any thing in which he is particularly intereſted, we ſhould refuſe to gratify his curioſity unleſs he keeps himſelf perfectly ſtill. The excitement here would be ſufficient to conquer the habit.

Whatever is connected with pain or pleaſure commands our attention; but to make this general obſervation uſeful in education, we muſt examine what degrees of ſtimulus are neceſſary for different pupils, and in different circumſtances. We have formerly obſerved *, that it is not prudent early to uſe violent or continual ſtimulus, either of a painful or a pleaſurable nature, to excite children to application, becauſe we ſhould by an intemperate uſe of theſe weaken the mind, and becauſe we may with a little patience obtain all we wiſh without theſe expedients. Beſides theſe reaſons, there is another potent argument againſt uſing violent motives to excite attention; ſuch motives frequently diſturb and diſſipate the very attention which they attempt to fix. If a child be threatened with ſevere puniſhment, or flattered with the promiſe of ſome delicious reward, in order to induce his performance of any particular taſk, he deſires inſtantly to perform the taſk: but this deſire will not enſure his ſucceſs; unleſs he has previouſly acquired the habit of voluntary exertion, he will not be able to turn his mind from his ardent wiſhes, even to the means of accompliſhing them. He will be in the ſituation of Alnaſchar in the Arabian tales, who, whilſt

* Chapter on Taſks.

he

he dreamt of his future grandeur, forgot his immediate buſineſs. The greater his hope or fear, the greater the difficulty of his employing himſelf.

To teach any new habit or art, we muſt not employ any alarming excitements: ſmall, certain, regularly recurring motives, which intereſt, but which do not diſtract the mind, are evidently the beſt. The ancient inhabitants of Minorca were ſaid to be the beſt ſlingers in the world; when they were children, every morning what they were to eat was ſlightly ſuſpended to high poles, and they were obliged to throw down their breakfaſts with their ſlings from the places where they were ſuſpended, before they could ſatisfy their hunger. The motive ſeems to have been here well proportioned to the effect that was required; it could not be any great misfortune to a boy to go without his breakfaſt; but as this motive returned every morning, it became ſufficiently ſerious to the hungry ſlingers.

It is impoſſible to explain this ſubject ſo as to be of uſe, without deſcending to minute particulars. When a mother ſays to her little daughter, as ſhe places on the table before her a bunch of ripe cherries, "Tell me, my dear, how many cherries are there, and I "will give them to you?"—the child's attention is fixed inſtantly; there is a ſufficient motive, not a motive which excites any violent paſſions, but which raiſes juſt ſuch a degree of hope as is neceſſary to produce attention. The little girl, if ſhe knows from experience that her mother's promiſe will be kept, and that her own patience is likely to ſucceed, counts the cherries carefully, has her reward, and upon the next ſimilar trial ſhe will from this ſucceſs be ſtill more diſpoſed to exert her attention. The pleaſure

of

of eating cherries, aſſociated with the pleaſure of ſucceſs, will balance the pain of a few moments prolonged application, and by degrees the cherries may be withdrawn, the aſſociation of pleaſure will remain. Objects or thoughts, that have been aſſociated with pleaſure, retain the power of pleaſing; as the needle touched by the loadſtone acquires polarity, and retains it long after the loadſtone is withdrawn.

Whenever attention is habitually raiſed by the power of aſſociation, we ſhould be careful to withdraw all the excitements that were originally uſed, becauſe theſe are now unneceſſary; and, as we have formerly obſerved, the ſteady rule with reſpect to ſtimulus ſhould be to give the leaſt poſſible quantity that will produce the effect we want. Succeſs is a great pleaſure; as ſoon as children become ſenſible to this pleaſure, that is to ſay, when they have taſted it two or three times, they will exert their attention merely with the hope of ſucceeding. We have ſeen a little boy of three years old, frowning with attention for ſeveral minutes together, whilſt he was trying to claſp and unclaſp a lady's bracelet; his whole ſoul was intent upon the buſineſs, he neither ſaw nor heard any thing elſe that paſſed in the room, though ſeveral people were talking, and ſome happened to be looking at him. The pleaſure of ſucceſs, when he had claſped the bracelet, was quite ſufficient; he looked for no praiſe, though he was perhaps pleaſed with the ſympathy that was ſhewn in his ſucceſs. Sympathy is a better reward for young children in ſuch circumſtances than praiſe, becauſe it does not excite vanity, and it is connected with benevolent feelings; beſides, it is not ſo violent a ſtimulus as applauſe.

Inſtead of increaſing excitements to produce attention, we may vary them, which will have juſt the ſame effect. When ſympathy fails, try curioſity; when curioſity fails, try praiſe; when praiſe begins to loſe its effect, try blame; and when you go back again to ſympathy, you will find that, after this interval, it will have recovered all its original power. Doctor Darwin, who has the happy art of illuſtrating, from the moſt familiar circumſtances in real life, the abſtract theories of philoſophy, gives us the following pictureſque inſtance of the uſe of varying motives to prolong exertion.

" A little boy, who was tired of walking, begged of his papa to
" carry him. ' Here,' ſays the reverend doctor, ' ride upon
" my gold headed cane;' and the pleaſed child, putting it between
" his legs, gallopped away with delight. Here the aid of another
" ſenſorial power, that of pleaſurable ſenſation, ſuperadded
" power to exhauſted volition, which could otherwiſe only have
" been exerted by additional pain, as by the laſh of ſlavery *."

Alexander the Great one day ſaw a poor man carrying upon his ſhoulders a heavy load of ſilver for the royal camp: the man tottered under his burthen, and was ready to give up the point from fatigue. " Hold on, friend, the reſt of the way, and carry
" it to your own tent, for it is yours," ſaid Alexander.

There are ſome people, who have the power of exciting others to great mental exertions, not by the promiſe of ſpecific rewards, or by the threats of any puniſhment, but by the ardent ambition

* Zoonomia, vol. i. page 435.

which

which they inſpire, by the high value which is ſet upon their love and eſteem. When we have formed a high opinion of a friend, his approbation becomes neceſſary to our own ſelf-complacency, and we think no labour too great to ſatisfy our attachment. Our exertions are not fatiguing, becauſe they are aſſociated with all the pleaſurable ſenſations of affection, ſelf-complacency, benevolence, and liberty. Theſe feelings in youth produce all the virtuous enthuſiaſm characteriſtic of great minds; even childhood is capable of it in ſome degree, as thoſe parents well know, who have ever enjoyed the attachment of a grateful affectionate child. Thoſe, who neglect to cultivate the affections of their pupils, will never be able to excite them to "noble ends," by "noble means." Theirs will be the dominion of fear, from which reaſon will emancipate herſelf, and from which yet more certainly revolt.

If Henry the Fourth of France had been reduced, like Dionyſius the tyrant of Syracuſe, to earn his bread as a ſchoolmaſter, what a different preceptor he would probably have made! Dionyſius muſt have been hated by his ſcholars as much as by his ſubjects, for it is ſaid, that "he* practiſed upon children that tyranny which he could no longer exerciſe over men."

The ambaſſador, who found Henry the Fourth playing upon the carpet with his children, would probably have truſted his own children, if he had any, to the care of ſuch an affectionate tutor.

Henry the Fourth would have attached his pupils whilſt he inſtructed them; they would have exerted themſelves becauſe they

* Cicero.

could not have been happy without his eſteem. Henry's courtiers, or rather his friends, for though he was a king, he had friends, ſometimes expreſſed ſurpriſe at their own diſintereſtedneſs: "This "king pays us with words," ſaid they, "and yet we are ſatiſ-"fied!" Sully, when he was only Baron de Roſny, and before he had any hopes of being a duke, was once in a paſſion with the king his maſter, and half reſolved to leave him, "But I don't "know how it was," ſays the honeſt miniſter, "with all his "faults, there is ſomething about Henry which I found I could "not leave; and when I met him again, a few words made me "forget all my cauſes of diſcontent."

Children are more eaſily attached than courtiers, and full as eaſily rewarded. When once this generous deſire of affection and eſteem is raiſed in the mind, their exertions ſeem to be univerſal, and ſpontaneous: children are then no longer like machines, which require to be wound up regularly to perform certain revolutions; they are animated with a living principle, which directs all that it inſpires.

We have endeavoured to point out the general excitements, and the general precautions, to be uſed in cultivating the power of attention; it may be expected, that we ſhould more particularly apply theſe to the characters of different pupils. We ſhall not here examine whether there be any original difference of character or intellect, becauſe this would lead into a wide theoretical diſcuſſion; a difference in the temper and talents of children early appears, and ſome practical remarks may be of ſervice to correct defects, or to improve abilities, whether we ſuppoſe them to be natural or acquired. The firſt differences which a preceptor obſerves between his pupils, when

he begins to teach them, are perhaps ſcarcely marked ſo ſtrongly as to ſtrike the careleſs ſpectator; but in a few years theſe varieties are apparent to every eye. This ſeems to prove, that during the interval the power of education has operated ſtrongly to increaſe the original propenſities. The quick and ſlow, the timid and preſumptuous, ſhould be early inſtructed ſo as to correct as much as poſſible their ſeveral defects.

The manner in which children are firſt inſtructed muſt tend either to increaſe or diminiſh their timidity, or their confidence in themſelves, to encourage them to undertake great things, or to reſt content with limited acquirements. Young people, who have found from experience that they cannot remember or underſtand one half of what is forced upon their attention, become extremely diffident of their own capacity, and they will not undertake as much even as they are able to perform. With timid tempers, we ſhould therefore begin by expecting but little from each effort, but whatever is attempted ſhould be certainly within their attainment; ſucceſs will encourage the moſt timid humility. It ſhould be carefully pointed out to diffident children, that attentive patience can do as much as quickneſs of intellect: if they perceive that time makes all the difference between the quick and the ſlow, they will be induced to perſevere. The tranſition of attention from one ſubject to another is difficult to ſome children, to others it is eaſy: if all be expected to do the ſame things in an equal period of time, the ſlow will abſolutely give up the competition; but, on the contrary, if they are allowed time, they will accompliſh their purpoſes. We have been confirmed in our belief of this doctrine by experiments; the ſame problems have been frequently given to children of different degrees of quickneſs, and though ſome ſucceeded much more

quickly than others, all the individuals in the family have perſevered till they have ſolved the queſtions: and the timid ſeem to have been more encouraged by this practical demonſtration of the infallibility of perſevering attention, than by any other methods which have been tried. When, after a number of ſmall ſucceſsful trials, they have acquired ſome ſhare of confidence in themſelves, when they are certain of the poſſibility of their performing any given operations, we may then preſs them a little as to velocity: when they are well acquainted with any ſet of ideas, we may urge them to quick tranſition of attention from one to another; but if we inſiſt upon this rapidity of tranſition before they are thoroughly acquainted with each idea in the aſſemblage, we ſhall only increaſe their timidity and heſitation; we ſhall confound their underſtandings, and depreſs their ambition.

It is of conſequence to diſtinguiſh between ſlow and ſluggiſh attention: ſometimes children appear ſtupid and heavy, when they are abſolutely exhauſted by too great efforts of attention; at other times they have ſomething like the ſame dulneſs of aſpect, before they have had any thing to fatigue them, merely from their not having yet awakened themſelves to buſineſs. We muſt be certain of our pupil's ſtate of mind before we proceed. If he be incapacitated from fatigue, let him reſt; if he be torpid, rouſe him with a rattling peal of thunder; but be ſure that you have not, as it has been ſaid of Jupiter*, recourſe to your thunder only when you are in the wrong. Some preceptors ſcold when they cannot explain, and grow angry in proportion to the fatigue they ſee expreſſed in the countenance of their unhappy pupils. If a timid child foreſees

* Lucian.

that

that an explanation will probably end in a phillipic, he cannot fix his attention, he is anticipating the evil of your anger, inſtead of liſtening to your demonſtrations; and he ſays, "Yes, yes, I ſee, "I know, I underſtand," with trembling eagerneſs, whilſt through the miſt and confuſion of his fears he can ſcarcely ſee or hear, much leſs underſtand, any thing. If you miſtake the confuſion and fatigue of terror for inattention or indolence, and preſs your pupil to further exertions, you will confirm, inſtead of curing his ſtupidity. You muſt diminiſh his fear before you can increaſe his attention. With children who are thus, from timid anxiety to pleaſe, diſpoſed to exert their faculties too much, it is obvious that no excitation ſhould be uſed, but every playful, every affectionate means ſhould be employed to diſſipate their apprehenſions.

It is more difficult to manage with thoſe who have ſluggiſh, than with thoſe who have timid attention. Indolent children have not uſually ſo lively a taſte for pleaſure as others have; they do not ſeem to hear or to ſee quickly; they are content with a little enjoyment; they have ſcarcely any ambition; they ſeem to prefer eaſe to all ſorts of glory; they have little voluntary exertion; and the pain of attention is to them ſo great, that they would preferably endure the pain of ſhame, and of all the accumulated puniſhments which are commonly deviſed for them by the vengeance of their exaſperated tutors. Locke notices this liſtleſs lazy humour in children; he claſſes it under the head "Sauntering;" and he divides ſaunterers into two ſpecies; thoſe who ſaunter only at their books and taſks; and thoſe who ſaunter at play and every thing. The book-ſaunterers have only an acute, the others have a chronic diſeaſe; the one is eaſily cured, the other diſeaſe will coſt more time and pains.

If

quickly than others, all the individuals in the family have perſevered till they have ſolved the queſtions: and the timid ſeem to have been more encouraged by this practical demonſtration of the infallibility of perſevering attention, than by any other methods which have been tried. When, after a number of ſmall ſucceſsful trials, they have acquired ſome ſhare of confidence in themſelves, when they are certain of the poſſibility of their performing any given operations, we may then preſs them a little as to velocity: when they are well acquainted with any ſet of ideas, we may urge them to quick tranſition of attention from one to another; but if we inſiſt upon this rapidity of tranſition before they are thoroughly acquainted with each idea in the aſſemblage, we ſhall only increaſe their timidity and heſitation; we ſhall confound their underſtandings, and depreſs their ambition.

It is of conſequence to diſtinguiſh between ſlow and ſluggiſh attention: ſometimes children appear ſtupid and heavy, when they are abſolutely exhauſted by too great efforts of attention; at other times they have ſomething like the ſame dulneſs of aſpect, before they have had any thing to fatigue them, merely from their not having yet awakened themſelves to buſineſs. We muſt be certain of our pupil's ſtate of mind before we proceed. If he be incapacitated from fatigue, let him reſt; if he be torpid, rouſe him with a rattling peal of thunder; but be ſure that you have not, as it has been ſaid of Jupiter*, recourſe to your thunder only when you are in the wrong. Some preceptors ſcold when they cannot explain, and grow angry in proportion to the fatigue they ſee expreſſed in the countenance of their unhappy pupils. If a timid child foreſees

* Lucian.

that

that an explanation will probably end in a phillipic, he cannot fix his attention, he is anticipating the evil of your anger, inſtead of liſtening to your demonſtrations; and he ſays, "Yes, yes, I ſee, "I know, I underſtand," with trembling eagerneſs, whilſt through the miſt and confuſion of his fears he can ſcarcely ſee or hear, much leſs underſtand, any thing. If you miſtake the confuſion and fatigue of terror for inattention or indolence, and preſs your pupil to further exertions, you will confirm, inſtead of curing his ſtupidity. You muſt diminiſh his fear before you can increaſe his attention. With children who are thus, from timid anxiety to pleaſe, diſpoſed to exert their faculties too much, it is obvious that no excitation ſhould be uſed, but every playful, every affectionate means ſhould be employed to diſſipate their apprehenſions.

It is more difficult to manage with thoſe who have ſluggiſh, than with thoſe who have timid attention. Indolent children have not uſually ſo lively a taſte for pleaſure as others have; they do not ſeem to hear or to ſee quickly; they are content with a little enjoyment; they have ſcarcely any ambition; they ſeem to prefer eaſe to all ſorts of glory; they have little voluntary exertion; and the pain of attention is to them ſo great, that they would preferably endure the pain of ſhame, and of all the accumulated puniſhments which are commonly deviſed for them by the vengeance of their exaſperated tutors. Locke notices this liſtleſs lazy humour in children; he claſſes it under the head "Sauntering;" and he divides ſaunterers into two ſpecies; thoſe who ſaunter only at their books and taſks; and thoſe who ſaunter at play and every thing. The book-ſaunterers have only an acute, the others have a chronic diſeaſe; the one is eaſily cured, the other diſeaſe will coſt more time and pains.

If

If by ſome unlucky management a vivacious child acquires a diſlike to literary application, he may appear at his books with all the ſtupid apathy of a dunce. In this ſtate of literary dereliction, we ſhould not force books and taſks of any ſort upon him; we ſhould rather watch him when he is eager at amuſements of his own ſelection, obſerve to what his attention turns, and cultivate his attention upon that ſubject, whatever it may be. He may be led to think, and to acquire knowledge upon a variety of ſubjects, without ſitting down to read; and thus he may form habits of attention and of application, which will be aſſociated with pleaſure. When he returns to books, he will find that he underſtands a variety of things in them which before appeared incomprehenſible; they will "give him back the image of his mind," and he will like them as he likes pictures.

As long as a child ſhows energy upon any occaſion, there is hope: if he "lend his little ſoul *" to whipping a top, there is no danger of being a dunce. When Alcibiades was a child, he was one day playing at dice with other boys in the ſtreet; a loaded waggon came up juſt as it was his turn to throw. At firſt he called to the driver to ſtop, but the waggoner would not ſtop his horſes; all the boys except Alcibiades ran away, but Alcibiades threw himſelf upon his face directly before the horſes, and ſtretching himſelf out, bid the waggoner drive on if he pleaſed. Perhaps at the time when he ſhewed this energy about a game at dice, Alcibiades might have been a ſaunterer at his book, and a fooliſh ſchoolmaſter might have made him a dunce.

* "And lends his little ſoul at every ſtroke." VIRGIL.

Locke

Locke adviſes that children, who are too much addicted to what is called play, ſhould be ſurfeited with it, that they may return to buſineſs with a better appetite. But this advice ſuppoſes that play has been previouſly interdicted, or that it is ſomething pernicious: we have endeavoured to ſhew that play is nothing but a change of employment, and that the attention may be exerciſed advantageouſly upon a variety of ſubjects which are not called Taſks *.

With thoſe who ſhew chronic liſtleſſneſs, Locke adviſes that we ſhould uſe every ſort of ſtimulus; praiſe, amuſement, fine clothes, eating; any thing that will make them beſtir themſelves. He argues, that as there appears a deficiency of vigour, we have no reaſon to fear exceſs of appetite for any of theſe things: nay, farther ſtill, where none of theſe will act, he adviſes compulſory bodily exerciſe. If we cannot, he ſays, make ſure of the inviſible attention of the mind, we may at leaſt get ſomething done, prevent the habit of total idleneſs, and perhaps make the children deſire to exchange labour of body for labour of mind. Theſe expedients will, we fear, be found rather palliative than effectual; if by forcing children to bodily exerciſe, that becomes diſagreeable, they may prefer labour of the mind; but in making this exchange, or bargain, they are ſenſible that they chooſe the leaſt of two evils. The evil of application is diminiſhed only by compariſon in their eſtimation; they will avoid it whenever they are at liberty. The love of eating, of fine clothes, &c. if they ſtimulate a ſlothful child, muſt be the ultimate object of his exertions; he will conſider the performance of his taſk merely as a painful condition on his part. Still the aſſociation of pain with literature continues; it is then impoſſible

* V. Chapter II. on Taſks.

that

that he ſhould love it. There is no active principle within him, no deſire for knowledge excited; his attention is forced, it ceaſes the moment the external force is withdrawn. He drudges to earn his cream bowl duly ſet, but he will ſtretch his lubbar length the moment his taſk is done.

There is another claſs of children oppoſed to ſaunterers, whom we may denominate volatile geniuſes. They ſhew a vaſt deal of quickneſs and vivacity; they underſtand almoſt before a tutor can put his ideas into words; they obſerve a variety of objects, but they do not connect their obſervations, and the very rapidity with which they ſeize an explanation prevents them from thoroughly comprehending it; they are eaſily diſturbed by external objects when they are thinking. As they have great ſenſibility, their aſſociations are ſtrong and various; their thoughts branch off into a thouſand beautiful, but uſeleſs ramifications. Whilſt you are attempting to inſtruct them upon one ſubject, they are inventing perhaps upon another, or they are following a train of ideas ſuggeſted by ſomething you have ſaid, but foreign to your buſineſs. They are more pleaſed with the diſcovery of reſemblances than with diſcrimination of differences; the one coſts them more time and attention than the other: they are apt to ſay witty things, and to ſtrike out ſparks of invention; but they have not commonly the patience to form exact judgments, or to bring their firſt inventions to perfection. When they begin the race every body expects that they ſhould outſtrip all competitors, but it is often ſeen that ſlower rivals reach the goal before them. The predictions formed of pupils of this temperament vary much according to the characters of their tutors. A ſlow man is provoked by their diſſipated vivacity, and, unable to catch or fix their attention, prognoſticates that they will never

never have ſufficient application to learn any thing. This prophecy, under certain tuition, would probably be accompliſhed. The want of ſympathy between a ſlow tutor and a quick child is a great diſadvantage to both; each inſiſts upon going his own pace, and his own way, and theſe ways are perhaps diametrically oppoſite. Even in forming a judgment of the child's attention, the tutor, who is not acquainted with the manner in which his pupil goes to work, is liable to frequent miſtakes. Children are ſometimes ſuſpected of not having liſtened to what has been ſaid to them, when they cannot exactly repeat the words that they have heard; they often aſk queſtions, and make obſervations, which ſeem quite foreign to the preſent buſineſs, but this is not always a proof that their minds are abſent, or that their attention is diſſipated. Their anſwers often appear to be far from the point, becauſe they ſuppreſs their intermediate ideas, and give only the reſult of their thoughts. This may be inconvenient to thoſe who teach them, but this habit ſufficiently proves that theſe children are not deficient in attention; to cure them of the fault which they have we ſhould not accuſe them falſely of another. But it may be queſtioned whether this be a fault; it is abſolutely neceſſary in many proceſſes of the mind to ſuppreſs a number of intermediate ideas. Life, if this were not practiſed, would be too ſhort for thoſe who think, and much too ſhort for thoſe who ſpeak. When ſomebody aſked Pyrrhus which of two muſicians he liked the beſt, he anſwered, "Polyſperchon "is the beſt general." This would appear to be the abſurd anſwer of an abſent perſon, or of a fool, if we did not conſider the ideas that are implied, as well as thoſe which are expreſſed.

March 5th, 1796. To-day, at dinner, a lady obſerved that Nicholſon, Williamſon, Jackſon, &c. were names which originally

meant the ſons of Nicholas, William, Jack, &c. A boy who was preſent, H——, added with a very grave face, as ſoon as ſhe had finiſhed ſpeaking, "Yes, ma'am, Tydides." His mother aſked him what he could mean by this abſent ſpeech? H—— calmly repeated, "Ma'am, yes; becauſe I think it is like Tydides." His brother S—— eagerly interpoſed to ſupply the intermediate ideas; "Yes indeed, mother," cried he, "H—— is not abſent, becauſe "*des* in Greek means *the ſon of* (the race of). Tydides is the "ſon of Tydeus, as Jackſon is the ſon of Jack." In this inſtance H—— was not abſent, though he did not make uſe of a ſufficient number of words to explain his ideas.

Auguſt, 1796. L——, when he returned home after ſome months abſence, entertained his brothers and ſiſters with a new play, which he had learned at Edinburgh. He told them that when he ſtruck the table with his hand every perſon preſent was inſtantaneouſly to remain fixed in the attitudes in which they ſhould be when the blow was given. The attitudes in which ſome of the little company were fixed occaſioned much diverſion; but in ſpeaking of this new play afterwards they had no name for it: whilſt they were thinking of a name for it, H—— exclaimed, "The Gorgon!" It was immediately agreed that this was a good name for the play, and H—— upon this occaſion was perfectly intelligible, without expreſſing all the intermediate ideas.

Good judges form an accurate eſtimate of the abilities of thoſe who converſe with them, by what they omit, as well as by what they ſay. If any one can ſhew that he alſo has been in Arcadia, he is ſure of being well received without producing minutes of his journey. In the ſame manner we ſhould judge of children; if they arrive at certain

certain concluſions in reaſoning, we may be ſatisfied that they hav taken all the neceſſary previous ſteps. We need not queſtion their attention upon ſubjects where they give proofs of invention; they muſt have remembered well, or they could not invent; they muſt have attended well, or they could not have remembered. Nothing wearies a quick child more than to be forced ſlowly to retrace his own thoughts, and to repeat the words of a diſcourſe to prove that he has liſtened to it. A tutor, who is ſlow in underſtanding the ideas of his vivacious pupil, gives him ſo much trouble and pain, that he grows ſilent from finding it not worth while to ſpeak. It is for this reaſon that children appear ſtupid and ſilent with ſome people, and ſprightly and talkative with others. Thoſe who hope to talk to children with any effect muſt, as Rouſſeau obſerves, be able to hear as well as to ſpeak. M. de Segrais, who was deaf, was much in the right to decline being preceptor to the Duke de Maine. A deaf preceptor would certainly make a child dumb.

To win the attention of vivacious children we muſt ſometimes follow them in their zigzag courſe, and even preſs them to the end of their own train of thought. They will be content when they have obtained a full hearing; then they will have leiſure to diſcover that what they were in ſuch haſte to utter was not ſo well worth ſaying as they imagined; that their bright ideas often, when ſteadily examined by themſelves, fade into abſurdities.

"Where does this path lead to? Can't we get over this ſtile? "May I *only* go into this wood?" exclaims an active child, when he is taken out to walk. Every path appears more delightful than the ſtraight road; but let him try the paths, they will perhaps end in diſappointment, and then his imagination will be corrected.

Let him try his own experiments, then he will be ready to try yours; and if yours ſucceed better than his own, you will ſecure his confidence. After a child has talked on for ſome time till he comes to the end of his ideas, then he will perhaps liſten to what you have to ſay, and if he finds it better than what he has been ſaying himſelf, he will voluntarily give you his attention the next time you begin to ſpeak.

Vivacious children are peculiarly ſuſceptible of blame and praiſe; we have, therefore, great power over their attachment, if we manage theſe excitements properly. Theſe children ſhould not be praiſed for their *happy hits*, their firſt * glances ſhould not be extolled; but, on the contrary, they ſhould be rewarded with univerſal approbation when they give proofs of patient induſtry, when they bring any thing to perfection. No one can bring any thing to perfection without long continued attention; and induſtry and perſeverance preſuppoſe attention. Proofs of any of theſe qualities may therefore ſatisfy us as to the pupil's capacity and habits of attention; we need not ſtand by to ſee the attention exerciſed, the things produced are ſufficient evidence. Buffon tells us that he wrote his Epoques de la Nature over eighteen times before he could perfect it to his taſte. The high finiſh of his compoſition is ſufficient evidence to intelligent readers, that he exerted long continued attention upon the work; they do not require to have the eighteen copies produced.

Bacon ſuppoſes, that for every diſeaſe of the mind ſpecific remedies might be found in appropriate ſtudies and exerciſes. Thus

* Aperçues.

for

for " bird-witted" children he preſcribes the ſtudy of mathematics, becauſe in mathematical ſtudies the attention muſt be fixed; the leaſt intermiſſion of thought breaks the whole chain of reaſoning, their labour is loſt, and they muſt begin their demonſtration again. This principle is excellent; but to apply it advantageouſly, we ſhould chooſe moments when a mathematical demonſtration is intereſting to children, elſe we have not ſufficient motive to excite them to commence the demonſtration; they will perceive, that they loſe all their labour if their attention is interrupted; but how ſhall we make them begin to attend? There are a variety of ſubjects which are intereſting to children, to which we may apply Bacon's principle; for inſtance, a child is eager to hear a ſtory which you are going to tell him; you may exerciſe his attention by your manner of telling this ſtory; you may employ with advantage the beautiful figure of ſpeech called *ſuſpenſion:* but you muſt take care, that the hope which is long deferred is at laſt gratified. The young critics will look back when your ſtory is finiſhed, and will examine whether their attention has been waſted, or whether all the particulars to which it was directed were eſſential. Though in amuſing ſtories we recommend the figure called ſuſpenſion *, we do not recommend its uſe in explanations. Our explanations ſhould be put into as few words as poſſible: the cloſer the connexion of ideas the better. When we ſay, allow time to underſtand your explanations, we mean, allow time between each idea, do not fill up the interval with words. Never by way of gaining time pay in ſixpences, this is the laſt reſource of a bankrupt.

* Deinology.

We

We formerly obſerved, that a preceptor, in his firſt leſſons on any new ſubject, muſt ſubmit to the drudgery of repeating his terms and his reaſoning, until theſe are ſufficiently familiar to his pupils. He muſt, however, proportion the number of his repetitions to the temper and habits of his pupils, elſe he will weary inſtead of ſtrengthening the attention. When a thing is clear, let him never try to make it clearer; when a thing is underſtood, not a word more of exemplification ſhould be added. To mark preciſely the moment when the pupil underſtands what is ſaid, the moment when he is maſter of the neceſſary ideas, and, conſequently, the moment when repetition ſhould ceaſe, is, perhaps, the moſt difficult thing in the art of teaching. The countenance, the eye, the voice, and manner of the pupil, mark this inſtant to an obſerving preceptor; but a preceptor, who is abſorbed in his own ideas, will never think of looking in his pupil's face, he will go on with his routine of explanation, whilſt his once lively, attentive pupil exhibits oppoſite to him the picture of ſtupified fatigue. Quick, intelligent children, who have frequently found that leſſons are reiterated by a patient but injudicious tutor, will learn a careleſs mode of liſtening at intervals; they will ſay to themſelves, "Oh I ſhall hear this again!" And if any ſtray thought comes acroſs their minds, they will not ſcruple to amuſe themſelves, and will afterwards aſk for a repetition of the words or ideas which they miſſed during this excurſion of fancy. When they hear the warning advertiſement of "certainly for the laſt time this ſeaſon," they will deem it time enough to attend to the performance. To cure them of this preſumption in favour of our patience, and of their own ſuperlative quickneſs, we ſhould preſs that quickneſs to its utmoſt ſpeed. Whenever we call for their attention, let it be on

ſubjects

ſubjects highly intereſting or amuſing, and let us give them but juſt ſufficient time with their fulleſt exertion to catch our words and ideas. As theſe quick gentlemen are proud of their rapidity of apprehenſion, this method will probably ſecure their attention, they will dread the diſgrace of not underſtanding what is ſaid, and they will feel that they cannot underſtand unleſs they exert prompt, vigorous, unremitted attention.

The ducheſs of Kingſton uſed to complain that ſhe could never acquire any knowledge, becauſe ſhe never could meet with any body who could teach her any thing "in two words." Her grace felt the ſame ſort of impatience which was expreſſed by the tyrant who expected to find a royal road to geometry.

Thoſe who believe themſelves endowed with genius, expect to find a royal road in every ſcience ſhorter, and leſs laborious, than the beaten paths of induſtry. Their expectations are uſually in proportion to their ignorance; they ſee to the ſummit only of one hill, and they do not ſuſpect the Alps that will ariſe as they advance: but as children become leſs preſumptuous, as they acquire more knowledge, we may bear with their juvenile impatience, whilſt we take meaſures to enlarge continually their ſphere of information. We ſhould not, however, humour the attention of young people, by teaching them always in the mode which we know ſuits their temper beſt. Vivacious pupils ſhould from time to time be accuſtomed to an exact enumeration of particulars; and we ſhould take opportunities to convince them, that an orderly connexion of proofs, and a minute obſervation of apparent trifles, are requiſite to produce the lively deſcriptions, great diſcoveries, and happy inventions, which pupils of this diſpoſition are ever prone to admire

admire with enthuſiaſm. They will learn not to paſs over *old* things, when they perceive that theſe may lead to ſomething *new*; and they will even ſubmit to ſober attention, when they feel that this is neceſſary even to the rapidity of genius. In the "Curioſities of Literature" there has been judiciouſly preſerved a curious inſtance of literary patience; the rough draught of that beautiful paſſage in Pope's tranſlation of the Iliad which deſcribes the parting of Hector and Andromache. The lines are in Pope's hand-writing, and his numerous corrections appear; the lines which ſeem to the reader to have been ſtruck off at a ſingle happy ſtroke, are proved to have been touched and retouched with the indefatigable attention of a great writer. The fragment, with all its climax of corrections, was ſhewn to a young vivacious poet of nine years old, as a practical leſſon, to prove the neceſſity of patience to arrive at perfection. Similar examples from real life ſhould be produced to young people at proper times; the teſtimony of men of acknowledged abilities, of men whom they have admired for genius, will come with peculiar force in favour of application. Parents well acquainted with literature, cannot be at a loſs to find appoſite illuſtrations. The life of Franklin is an excellent example of perſevering induſtry; the variations in different editions of Voltaire's dramatic poetry, and in Pope's works, are worth examining. All Sir Joſhua Reynolds's eloquent academical diſcourſes enforce the doctrine of patience; when he wants to prove to painters the value of continual energetic attention, he quotes from Livy the character of Philopœmen, one of the ableſt generals of antiquity. So certain it is, that the ſame principle pervades all ſuperior minds: whatever may be their purſuits, attention is the avowed primary cauſe of their ſucceſs. Theſe examples from the dead ſhould be well ſupported by examples from amongſt the living; in common life occur-

rences can frequently be pointed out, in which attention and application are amply rewarded with ſucceſs.

It will encourage thoſe who are intereſted in education, to obſerve, that two of the moſt difficult exerciſes of the mind can by practice be rendered familiar, even by perſons whom we do not conſider as poſſeſſed of ſuperior talents. Abſtraction and tranſition—abſtraction, the power of withdrawing the attention from all external objects, and concentrating it upon ſome particular ſet of ideas, we admire as one of the moſt difficult exerciſes of the philoſopher. Abſtraction was formerly conſidered as ſuch a difficult and painful operation, that it required perfect ſilence and ſolitude; many ancient philoſophers quarrelled with their ſenſes, and ſhut themſelves up in caves, to ſecure their attention from the diſtraction cauſed by external objects. But modern * philoſophers have diſcovered, that neither caves nor lamps are eſſential to the full and ſucceſsful exerciſe of their mental powers. Perſons of ordinary abilities, tradeſmen and ſhopkeepers, in the midſt of the tumult of a public city, in the noiſe of rumbling carts and rattling carriages, amidſt the voices of a multitude of people talking upon various ſubjects, amidſt the provoking interruptions of continual queſtions and anſwers, and in the broad glare of a hot ſun, can command, and abſtract their attention ſo far as to calculate yards, ells, and nails, to caſt up long ſums in addition right to a farthing, and to make out multifarious bills with quick and unerring preciſion. In almoſt all the dining houſes at Vienna, as a late traveller † informs us, " a bill of fare containing a vaſt collection of diſhes is written " out, and the prices are affixed to each article. As the people of

* V. Condillac art de penſer. † Mr. Owen.

" Vienna are fond of variety, the calculation at the concluſion of " a repaſt would appear ſomewhat embarraſſing; this, however, " is done by mechanical habit with great ſpeed; the cuſtom is for " the party who has dined to name the diſhes, and the quantity " of bread and wine. The keller who attends on this occaſion, " follows every article you name with the ſum, which this adds " to the calculation, and the whole is performed, to whatever " amount, without ink or paper. It is curious to hear this cere- " mony, which is muttered with great gravity, yet performed " with accuracy and diſpatch."

We coolly obſerve, when we read theſe things, " Yes, this is " all habit; any body who had uſed himſelf to it might do " the ſame things." Yet the very ſame power of abſtracting the attention, when employed upon ſcientific and literary ſubjects, would excite our aſtoniſhment; and we ſhould, perhaps, immediately attribute it to ſuperior original genius. We may ſurely educate children to this habit of abſtracting the attention, which we allow depends entirely upon practice. When we are very much intereſted upon any ſubject, we attend to it excluſively, and without any effort we ſurmount all petty interpoſing interruptions. When we are reading an intereſting book, twenty people may converſe round about us, without our hearing one word that they ſay; when we are in a crowded playhouſe, the moment we become intereſted in the play, the audience vaniſh from our ſight, and in the midſt of various noiſes we hear only the voices of the actors.

In the ſame manner children, by their eager looks and their unaffected abſence to all external circumſtances, ſhew when they are thoroughly intereſted by any ſtory that is told with eloquence ſuited

ſuited to their age. When we would teach them to attend in the midſt of noiſe and interruptions, we ſhould therefore begin by talking to them about things which we are ſure will pleaſe them; by degrees we may ſpeak on leſs captivating ſubjects, when we perceive that their habit of beginning to liſten with an expectation of pleaſure is formed. Whenever a child happens to be intent upon any favourite amuſement, or when he is reading any very entertaining book, we may increaſe the buſy hum round him, we may make what buſtle we pleaſe, he will probably continue attentive; it is uſeful therefore to give him ſuch amuſements and ſuch books when there is a noiſe or buſtle in the room, becauſe then he will learn to diſregard all interruptions; and when this habit is formed, he may even read leſs amuſing books in the ſame company without being interrupted by the uſual noiſes.

The power of abſtracting our attention is univerſally allowed to be neceſſary to the ſucceſsful labour of the underſtanding; but we may farther obſerve, that this abſtraction is characteriſtic in ſome caſes of heroiſm as well as of genius. Charles the Twelfth and Archimedes were very different men, yet both in ſimilar circumſtances gave ſimilar proofs of their uncommon power of abſtracting their attention. "What has the bomb to do with what you are "writing to Sweden," ſaid the hero to his pale ſecretary when a bomb burſt through the roof of his apartment, and he continued to dictate his letter. Archimedes went on with his demonſtration in the midſt of a ſiege, and when a brutal ſoldier entered with a drawn ſword, the philoſopher only begged he might ſolve his problem before he was put to death.

Preſence of mind in danger, which is uſually ſuppoſed to depend

upon our quick perception of all the preſent circumſtances, frequently demands a total abſtraction of our thoughts. In danger, fear is the motive which excites our exertions, but from all the ideas that fear naturally ſuggeſts, we muſt abſtract our attention, or we ſhall not act with courage or prudence. In proportion to the violence of our terror our voluntary exertion muſt be great to withdraw our thoughts from the preſent danger, and to recollect the means of eſcape. In ſome caſes, where the danger has been aſſociated with the uſe of certain methods of eſcape, we uſe theſe without deliberation, and conſequently without any effort of attention; as when we ſee any thing catch fire we inſtantly throw water upon the flames to extinguiſh them. But in new ſituations, where we have no mechanical courage, we muſt exert much voluntary, quick, abſtract attention, to eſcape from danger.

When Lee the poet was confined in Bedlam, a friend went to viſit him, and finding that he could converſe reaſonably, or at leaſt reaſonably for a poet, imagined that Lee was cured of his madneſs. The poet offered to ſhew him Bedlam. They went over this melancholy, medical priſon, Lee moraliſing philoſophically enough all the time to keep his companion perfectly at eaſe. At length they aſcended together to the top of the building, and as they were both looking down from the perilous height, Lee ſeized his friend by the arm, "Let us immortaliſe ourſelves!" he exclaimed; "let us "take this leap. We'll jump down together this inſtant." "Any "man could jump down," ſaid his friend, coolly; "we ſhould "not immortaliſe ourſelves by that leap; but let us go down, and "try if we can jump up again." The madman, ſtruck with the idea of a more aſtoniſhing leap than that which he had himſelf propoſed,

poſed, yielded to this new impulſe, and his friend rejoiced to ſee him run down ſtairs full of a new project for ſecuring immortality.

Lee's friend upon this occaſion ſhewed rather abſence than preſence of mind: before he could have invented the happy anſwer that ſaved his life, he muſt have abſtracted his mind from the paſſion of fear; he muſt have rapidly turned his attention upon a variety of ideas unconnected by any former aſſociations with the exciting motive—falling from a height—fractured ſkulls—certain death—impoſſibility of reaſoning or wreſtling with a madman. Theſe were the train of thoughts which we might naturally expect to ariſe in ſuch a ſituation, but from all theſe the man of *preſence of mind* turned away his attention; he muſt have directed his thoughts in a contrary line: firſt he muſt have thought of the means of ſaving himſelf, of ſome argument likely to perſuade a madman, of ſome argument peculiarly ſuited to Lee's imagination, and applicable to his ſituation; he muſt at this moment have conſidered that alarming ſituation without thinking of his fears; for the interval in which all theſe ideas paſſed in his mind muſt have been ſo ſhort that he could not have had leiſure to combat fear; if any of the ideas aſſociated with that paſſion had interrupted his reaſonings, he would not have invented his anſwer in time to have ſaved his life.

We cannot foreſee on what occaſions preſence of mind may be wanted, but we may by education give that general command of abſtract attention, which is eſſential to its exerciſe in all circumſtances.

Tranſition of thought, the power of turning attention quickly from

from one ſubject, or one employment, to another, is another of thoſe mental habits, which in ſome caſes we call genius, and which in others we perceive depends entirely upon practice. A number of trials in one newſpaper upon a variety of unconnected ſubjects once ſtruck our eye, and we ſaw the name of a celebrated lawyer * as counſel in each cauſe. We could not help feeling involuntary admiration at that verſatility of genius, which could paſs from a fractional calculation about a London chaldron of coals to the Jamaica laws of inſurance; from the bargains of a citizen to the divorce of a fine lady; from pathos to argument; from arithmetic to wit; from croſs examination to eloquence. For a moment we forgot our ſober principles, and aſcribed all this verſatility of mind to natural genius; but upon reflexion we recurred to the belief, that this dexterity of intellect was not beſtowed by nature. We obſerve in men who have no pretenſions to genius ſimilar verſatility of mind as to their uſual employments. The daily occupations of Mr. Elwes's huntſman were as various and incongruous, and required as quick tranſitions of attention, as any that can well be imagined.

" At † four o'clock he milked the cows; then got breakfaſt for " Mr. Elwes and friends; then ſlipping on a green coat, he hur- " ried into the ſtable, ſaddled the horſes, got the hounds out of " the kennel, and away they went into the field. After the fatigues " of hunting he *refreſhed* himſelf by rubbing down two or three " horſes as quickly as he could; then running into the houſe to " lay the cloth, and wait at dinner; then hurrying again into the " ſtable to feed the horſes, diverſified with an interlude of the

* Mr. Erſkine—The STAR.

† V. Life of John Elwes, Eſq. by T. Topham.

" COWS

" cows again to milk, the dogs to feed, and eight hunters to litter " down for the night." Mr. Elwes uſed to call this huntſman an idle dog, who wanted to be paid for doing nothing!

We do not mean to require any ſuch rapid daily tranſitions in the exerciſe of attention from our pupils; but we think that much may be done to improve verſatility of mind by a judicious arrangement of their occupations. When we are tired of ſmelling a roſe, we can ſmell a carnation with pleaſure; and when the ſenſe of ſmell is fatigued, yet we can look at the beautiful colours with delight. When we are tired of thinking upon one ſubject, we can attend to another; when our memory is fatigued, the exerciſe of the imagination entertains us; and when we are weary of reaſoning, we can amuſe ourſelves with wit and humour. Men, who have attended much to the cultivation of their mind, ſeem to have felt all this, and they have kept ſome ſubordinate taſte as a refreſhment after their labours. Deſcartes went from the ſyſtem of the world to his flower-garden; Galileo uſed to read Arioſto; and the metaphyſical Dr. Clarke recovered himſelf from abſtraction by jumping over chairs and tables. The learned and indefatigable chancellor d'Agueſſeau declared, that change of employment was the only recreation he ever knew. Even Montaigne, who found his recreation in playing with his cat, educated himſelf better than thoſe are educated who go from intenſe ſtudy to complete idleneſs. It has been very wiſely recommended by Mr. Locke, that young people ſhould early be taught ſome mechanical employment, or ſome agreeable art, to which they may recur for relief when they are tired by mental application *.

* V. Chapter on Toys.

Doctor

Doctor Darwin ſuppoſes that "animal motions, or configura-
"tions of the organs of ſenſe, conſtitute our ideas*. The fatigue,
"he obſerves, that follows a continued attention of the mind to
"one object, is relieved by changing the ſubject of our thoughts,
"as the continued movement of one limb is relieved by moving
"another in its ſtead." Dr. Darwin has farther ſuggeſted a tempt-
ing ſubject of experiment in his theory of ocular ſpectra, to which
we refer ingenious preceptors. Many uſeful experiments in educa-
tion might be tried upon the principles which are there ſuggeſted.
We dare not here truſt ourſelves to ſpeculate upon this ſubject, be-
cauſe we are not at preſent provided with a ſufficient number of
facts to apply our theory to practice. If we could exactly diſcover
how to arrange mental employments ſo as to induce actions in the
antagoniſt faculties of the mind, we might relieve it from fatigue
in the ſame manner as the eye is relieved by change of colour. By
purſuing this idea might we not hope to cultivate the general power
of attention to a degree of perfection hitherto unknown?

We have endeavoured to ſhew how, by different arrangements
and proper excitations, a preceptor may acquire that command over
the attention of his pupils, which is abſolutely eſſential to ſucceſsful
inſtruction; but we muſt recollect, that when the years commonly
devoted to education are over, when young people are no longer
under the care of a preceptor, they will continue to feel the ad-
vantages of a command of attention, whenever they mix in the ac-
tive buſineſs of life, or whenever they apply to any profeſſion,
to literature, or ſcience. Their attention muſt now be entirely
voluntary, they will have no tutor to excite them to exertion, no

* Zoonomia, vol. i. p. 21, 24.

nice

nice habitual arrangements to aſſiſt them in their daily occupations. It is of conſequence, therefore, that we ſhould ſubſtitute the power of voluntary, for the habit of aſſociated attention. With young children we depend upon particular aſſociations of place, time, and manner, upon different ſorts of excitation, to produce habits of application: but as our pupils advance in their education, all theſe temporary excitements ſhould be withdrawn. Some large, but diſtant object, ſome purſuit which is not to be rewarded with immediate praiſe, but rather with permanent advantage and eſteem, ſhould be held out to the ambition of youth. All the arrangements ſhould be left to the pupil himſelf, all the difficulties ſhould be ſurmounted by his own induſtry, and the intereſt he takes in his own ſucceſs and improvement will now probably be a ſufficient ſtimulus; his preceptor will now rather be his partner than his maſter, he ſhould rather ſhare the labour than attempt to direct it: this ſpecies of ſympathy in ſtudy diminiſhes the pain of attention, and gives an agreeable intereſt even in the moſt tireſome reſearches. When a young man perceives that his preceptor becomes in this manner the companion of his exertions, he loſes all ſuſpicion that he is compelled to mental labour; it is improper to ſay *loſes*, for in a good education this ſuſpicion need not ever be created: he diſcovers, we ſhould rather ſay, that all the habits of attention which he has acquired, are thoſe which are uſeful to men as well as to children, and he feels the advantage of his cultivated powers on every freſh occaſion. He will perceive, that young men who have been ill educated cannot by any motive command their vigorous attention, and he will feel the cauſe of his own ſuperiority, when he comes to any trial of ſkill with inattentive *men of genius*.

One of the arguments which Bayle uſes, to prove that fortune

has a greater influence than prudence in the affairs of men, is founded upon the common obſervation, that men of the beſt abilities cannot frequently recollect in urgent circumſtances what they have ſaid or done; the things occur to them perhaps a moment after they are paſt. The fact ſeems to be, that they could not in the proper moment command their attention; but this we ſhould attribute to the want of prudence in their early education. Thus, Bayle's argument does not in this point of view prove any thing in favour of fortune. Thoſe who can beſt command their attention, in the greateſt variety of circumſtances, have the moſt uſeful abilities; without this command of mind, men of genius, as they are called, are helpleſs beings; with it perſons of inferior capacity become valuable. Addiſon trembled and doubted, and doubted and trembled, when he was to write a common official paper; and it is ſaid, that he was abſolutely obliged to reſign his place, becauſe he could not decide in time whether he ſhould write a *that* or a *which*. No buſineſs could have been tranſacted by ſuch an imbecile miniſter.

To ſubſtitute voluntary for aſſociated attention, we may withdraw ſome of the uſually aſſociated circumſtances, and increaſe the excitement; and we may afterwards accuſtom the pupil to act from the hope of diſtant pleaſures. Unleſs children can be actuated by the view of future diſtant advantage, they cannot be capable of long continued application. We ſhall endeavour to explain how the value of diſtant pleaſures can be increaſed, and made to act with ſufficient force upon the mind, when we hereafter ſpeak of judgment and of imagination.

It has been obſerved, that perſons of wit and judgment have perhaps

perhaps originally the ſame powers, and that the difference in their characters ariſes from their different habits of attention, and the different claſs of objects to which they have turned their thoughts. The manner in which we are firſt taught to obſerve, and to reaſon, muſt in the firſt years of life decide theſe habits. There are two methods of teaching; one which aſcends from particular facts to general principles, the other which deſcends from the general principles to particular facts; one which builds up, another which takes to pieces; the ſynthetic and the analytic method. The words analyſis and ſyntheſis are frequently miſapplied, and it is difficult to write or to ſpeak long about theſe methods without confounding them: in learning or in teaching, we often uſe them alternately. We firſt obſerve particulars, then form ſome general idea of claſſification, then deſcend again to new particulars, to obſerve whether they correſpond with our principle.

Children acquire knowledge, and their attention alternates from particular to general ideas, exactly in the ſame manner. It has been remarked, that men who have begun by forming ſuppoſitions, are inclined to adapt and to compreſs their conſequent obſervations to the meaſure of their theories; they have been negligent in collecting facts, and have not condeſcended to try experiments. This diſpoſition of mind, during a long period of time, retarded improvement, and knowledge was confined to a few peremptory maxims, and excluſive principles. The neceſſity of collecting facts, and of trying experiments, was at length perceived, and in all the ſciences this mode has lately prevailed: conſequently, we have now on many ſubjects a treaſure of accumulated facts. We are, in educating children, to put them in poſſeſſion of all this knowledge; and a judicious preceptor will wiſh to know, not only how theſe facts can be

crammed ſpeedily into his pupil's memory, but what order of preſenting them will be moſt advantageous to the underſtanding; he will deſire to cultivate his pupil's faculties, that he may acquire new facts, and make new obſervations after all the old facts have been arranged in his mind.

By a judicious arrangement of paſt experiments, and by the rejection of what are uſeleſs, an able inſtructor can ſhew, in a ſmall compaſs, what it has coſt the labour of ages to accumulate; he may teach in a few hours what the moſt ingenious pupil, left to his own random efforts, could not have learned in many years. It would take up as much time to go over all the ſteps which have been made in any ſcience, as it originally coſt the firſt diſcoverers. Simply to repeat all the fruitleſs experiments which have been made in chemiſtry, for inſtance, would probably employ the longeſt life that ever was devoted to ſcience; nor would the individual have got one ſtep forwarder, he would die, and with him his recapitulated knowledge; neither he nor the world would be the better for it. It is our buſineſs to ſave children all this uſeleſs labour, and all this waſte of the power of attention. A pupil, who is properly inſtructed, with the ſame quantity of attention learns, perhaps, a hundred times as much in the ſame time, as he could acquire under the tuition of a learned preceptor ignorant in the art of teaching.

The analytic and ſynthetic methods of inſtruction will both be found uſeful when judiciouſly employed. Where the enumeration of particulars fatigues the attention, we ſhould in teaching any ſcience begin by ſtating the general principles, and afterwards produce only the facts eſſential to their illuſtration and proof. But

wherever we have not accumulated a ſufficient number of facts to be accurately certain of any general principle, we muſt, however tedious the taſk, enumerate all the facts that are known, and warn the pupil of the imperfect ſtate of the ſcience. All the facts muſt in this caſe be ſtored up with ſcrupulous accuracy; we cannot determine which are unimportant, and which may prove eſſentially uſeful: this can be decided only by future experiments. By thus ſtating honeſtly to our pupils the extent of our ignorance, as well as the extent of our knowledge; by thus directing attention to the imperfections of ſcience rather than to the ſtudy of theories, we ſhall avoid the juſt reproaches which have been thrown upon the dogmatic vanity of learned preceptors.

" For as knowledges are now," ſays Bacon, " there is a kind " of contract of error between the deliverer and receiver; for he " that delivereth knowledge, deſireth to deliver it in ſuch a form " as may be beſt believed, and not as may be beſt examined; " and he that receiveth knowledge, deſireth rather preſent ſatisfac- " tion than expectant inquiry; and ſo rather not to doubt, than not " to err; glory making the author not to lay open his weakneſs, " and ſloth making the diſciple not to know his ſtrength *."

† Bacon, vol. i. page 84.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER IV.

SERVANTS.

" Now, Maſter *," ſaid a fond nurſe to her favourite boy, after having given him ſugared bread and butter for ſupper, " now, maſter, kiſs me; wipe your mouth, dear, and go up to the " drawing room to mamma; and when miſtreſs aſks you what " you have had for ſupper, you'll ſay, bread and butter, for you " *have had* bread and butter, you know, maſter." " And ſugar," ſaid the boy; " I muſt ſay bread and butter and ſugar, you know."

How few children would have had the courage to have added, " and ſugar!" How dangerous it is to expoſe them to ſuch temptations! The boy muſt have immediately perceived the object of his nurſe's caſuiſtry. He muſt gueſs that ſhe would be blamed for the addition of the ſugar, elſe why ſhould ſhe wiſh to ſuppreſs the word? His gratitude is engaged to his nurſe for running this riſk to indulge him; his mother, by the force of contraſt, appears a ſe-

* Verbatim from what has been really ſaid to a boy.

vere

vere perſon, who, for no reaſon that he can comprehend, would deprive him of the innocent pleaſure of eating ſugar. As to its making him ſick, he has eat it, and he is not ſick; as to its ſpoiling his teeth, he does not care about his teeth, and he ſees no immediate change in them: therefore he concludes that his mother's orders are capricious, and that his nurſe loves him better than ſhe does, becauſe ſhe gives him the moſt pleaſure. His honour and affection towards his nurſe are immediately ſet in oppoſition to his duty to his mother. What a hopeful beginning in education! What a number of dangerous ideas may be given by a ſingle word!

The taſte for ſugared bread and butter is ſoon over, but ſervants have it in their power to excite other taſtes with premature and factitious enthuſiaſm. The waiting-maid, a taſte for dreſs; the footman, a taſte for gaming; the coachman and groom, for horſes and equipage; and the butler, for wine. The ſimplicity of children is not a defence to them; and though they are totally ignorant of vice, they are expoſed to adopt the principles of thoſe with whom they live, even before they can apply them to their own conduct.

The young ſon of a lady of quality, a boy of ſix or ſeven years old, addreſſed with great ſimplicity the following ſpeech to a lady who viſited his mother.

Boy. Miſs N——, I wiſh you could find ſomebody, when you go to London, who would keep you. It's a very good thing to be kept.

Lady.

Lady. What do you mean, my dear?

Boy. Why it's when—you know, when a perſon's kept, they have every thing found for them; their friend ſaves them all trouble, you know. They have a *carriage* and *diamonds*, and every thing they want. I wiſh ſomebody would keep you.

Lady, laughing. But I'm afraid nobody would. Do you think any body would?

Boy, after a pauſe. Why yes, I think Sir ———, naming a gentleman whoſe name had at this time been much talked of in a public trial, would be as likely as any body.

The ſame boy talked familiarly of phaetons and gigs, and wiſhed that he was grown up, that he might drive four horſes in hand. It is obvious that theſe ideas were put into the boy's head by the ſervants with whom he aſſociated.

Without ſuppoſing them to be profligate, ſervants, from their ſituation, from all that they ſee of the ſociety of their ſuperiors, and from the early prejudices of their own education, learn to admire that wealth and rank to which they are bound to pay homage. The luxuries and follies of faſhionable life they miſtake for happineſs; they meaſure the reſpect they pay to ſtrangers by their external appearance; they value their own maſters and miſtreſſes by the ſame ſtandard; and in their attachment there is a neceſſary mixture of that ſympathy which is ſacred to proſperity. Setting aſide all intereſted motives, ſervants love ſhow and prodigality in their maſters; they feel that they partake the triumph, and they wiſh it to be as magnificent as poſſible.

Theſe diſpoſitions break out naturally in the converſation of ſervants with one another; if children are ſuffered to hear them, they will quickly catch the ſame taſtes. But if theſe ideas break out in their unpremeditated goſſiping with one another, how much more ſtrong will they be expreſſed when ſervants wiſh to ingratiate themſelves into a child's affections by flattery! Their method of ſhewing their attachment to a family is uſually to exaggerate in their expreſſions of admiration of its conſequence and grandeur; they depreciate all whom they imagine to be competitors in any reſpect with their maſters, and feed and foſter the little jealouſies which exiſt between neighbouring families. The children of theſe families are thus early ſet at variance; the children in the ſame family are often taught, by the imprudence or malice of ſervants, to diſlike and envy each other. In houſes where each child has an attendant, the attendants regularly quarrel, and, out of a ſhew of zeal, make their young maſters and miſtreſſes parties in their animoſity. Three or four maids ſometimes produce their little dreſſed pupils for a few minutes to *the company* in the drawing room, for the expreſs purpoſe of ſeeing which ſhall obtain the greateſt ſhare of admiration. This competition, which begins in their nurſes arms, is continued by daily artifices through the whole courſe of their nurſery education. Thus the emulation of children is rendered a torment to them, their ambition is directed to abſurd and vile purpoſes, the underſtanding is perverted, their temper is ſpoiled, their ſimplicity of mind, and their capability of enjoying happineſs, materially injured.

The language and manners, the awkward and vulgar tricks which children learn in the ſociety of ſervants, are immediately perceived, and diſguſt and ſhock well bred parents. This is an evil which is ſtriking and diſgraceful; it is more likely to be re-

medied than thoſe which are more ſecret and ſlow in their operation: the habits of cunning, falſehood, envy, which lurk in the temper, are not inſtantly viſible to ſtrangers, they do not appear the moment children are reviewed by parents; they may remain for years without notice or without cure.

All theſe things have been ſaid a hundred times; and, what is more, they are univerſally acknowledged to be true. It has paſſed into a common maxim with all who reflect, and even with all who ſpeak upon the ſubject of education, that "it is the worſt thing "in the world to leave children with ſervants." But, notwithſtanding this, each perſon imagines that they have found ſome lucky exception to the general rule. There is ſome favourite maid or phœnix of a footman in each family, who is ſuppoſed to be unlike all other ſervants, and therefore qualified for the education of children. But, if their qualifications were ſcrupulouſly examined, it is to be feared they would not be found competent to the truſt that is repoſed in them. They may nevertheleſs be excellent ſervants, much attached to their maſters and miſtreſſes, and ſincerely deſirous to obey their orders in the management of their pupils; but this is not ſufficient. In education it is not enough to obey the laws, it is neceſſary to underſtand them; to underſtand the ſpirit, as well as the letter of the law. The blind application of general maxims will never ſucceed; and can that nice diſcrimination which is neceſſary to the juſt uſe of good principles, be expected from thoſe who have never ſtudied the human mind, who have little motive for the ſtudy, whoſe knowledge is technical, and who have never had any liberal education? Give, or attempt to give, the beſt waiting-maid in London the general maxim,

"That pain ſhould be aſſociated with whatever we wiſh to make

" children avoid doing; and pleaſure ſhould be aſſociated with " whatever we wiſh that children ſhould love to do;" will the waiting-maid underſtand this, even if you exchange the word *aſſociated* for *joined?* How will ſhe apply her new principle in practice? She will probably tranſlate it into " Whip the child " when it is troubleſome, and give it ſweetmeats when it does as " it is bid." With this compendious ſyſtem of tuition ſhe is well ſatisfied, eſpecially as it contains nothing which is new to her underſtanding, or foreign to her habits. But if we ſhould expect her to enter into the views of a Locke or a Barbauld, would it not be at once unreaſonable and ridiculous?

What has been ſaid of the underſtanding and diſpoſitions of ſervants, relates only to ſervants as they are now educated. Their vices and their ignorance ariſe from the ſame cauſes, the want of education. They are not a ſeparate caſt in ſociety doomed to ignorance, or degraded by inherent vice; they are capable, they are deſirous of inſtruction. Let them be well educated *, and the difference in their conduct and underſtanding will repay ſociety for the trouble of the undertaking. This education muſt begin as early as poſſible; let us not imagine that it is practicable to change the habits of ſervants who are already educated, and to make them ſuddenly fit companions in a family. They ſhould not in any degree be permitted to interfere with the management of children,

* Perhaps an inſtitution for the education of attendants upon children would be of the higheſt utility.

Mr. ——— had once an intention of educating forty children for this purpoſe; from amongſt whom he propoſed to ſelect eight or ten as maſters for future ſchools upon the ſame plan.

till

till their own education has been radically reformed. Let ſervants be treated with the utmoſt kindneſs, let their ſituations be made as happy as poſſible, let the reward of their ſervices and attachment be as liberal as poſſible; but reward with juſtice, do not ſacrifice your children to pay your own debts. Familiarity between ſervants and children cannot permanently increaſe the happineſs of either party. Children, who have early lived with ſervants, as they grow up are notoriouſly apt to become capricious and tyrannical maſters. A boy who has been uſed to treat a footman as his playfellow, cannot ſuddenly command from him that ſpecies of deference, which is compounded of habitual reſpect for the perſon, and conventional ſubmiſſion to his ſtation; the young maſter muſt therefore effect a change in his footman's manner of thinking and ſpeaking by violent means; he muſt extort that tribute of reſpect which he has neglected ſo long, and to which, conſequently, his right is diſputed *. He is ſenſible, that his ſuperiority is merely that of ſituation, and he therefore exerts his dormant prerogatives with jealous inſolence. No maſter is ſo likely to become the tyrant of his valet-de-chambre, as he who is conſcious that he never *can* appear to him a hero. No ſervant feels the yoke of ſervitude more galling, than he who has been partially emancipated, who has loſt his habits of "proud ſubordination, and his "taſte for dignified ſubmiſſion †."

No miſtaken motive of tenderneſs to domeſtics ſhould operate upon the minds of parents; or ſhould they heſitate, for the general happineſs of their families, to inſiſt upon a total ſeparation be-

* V. The comedy of Wild Oats. † Burke.

tween

tween thoſe parts of it which will injure each other eſſentially by their union.

Every body readily diſclaims the idea of letting children live with ſervants; but, beſides the exceptions in favour of particular individuals, there is yet another cauſe of the difference between theory and practice upon this ſubject. Time is left out of the conſideration; people forget that life is made up of days and hours; and they by no means think, that letting children paſs ſeveral hours every day with ſervants has any thing to do with the idea of living with them. We muſt contract this latitude of expreſſion. If children paſs one hour in a day with ſervants, it will be in vain to attempt their education.

Madame Roland, in one of her letters to De Boſc, ſays, that her little daughter Eudora had learned to ſwear; "and yet," continues ſhe, "I leave her but one half hour a day with ſervants. Admirez la diſpoſition!" Madame Roland could not have been much accuſtomed to attend to education.

Whilſt children are very young there appears a neceſſity for their ſpending at leaſt half an hour a day with ſervants; till they are at leaſt four or five years old, they cannot dreſs or undreſs themſelves, or, if they attempt it, they may learn careleſs habits, which in girls are particularly to be avoided. If a mother, or a governeſs, would make it a rule to be preſent when they are dreſſing, a maid ſervant would not talk to them, and could do them but little injury. It is of conſequence, that the maid ſervant ſhould herſelf be perfectly neat both from habit and taſte. Children obſerve exactly

the

the manner in which every thing is done for them, and have the wiſh, even before they have the power, to imitate what they ſee; they love order, if they are accuſtomed to it, and if their firſt attempts at arrangement are not made irkſome by injudicious management. What they ſee done every day in a particular manner, they learn to think part of the buſineſs of the day, and they are uneaſy if any of the rites of cleanlineſs are forgotten; the tranſition from this uneaſineſs, to the deſire of exerting themſelves, is ſoon made, particularly if they are ſometimes left to feel the inconveniences of being helpleſs. This ſhould, and can be done, without affectation. A maid cannot be always ready the inſtant ſhe is wanted to attend upon them; they ſhould not be waited upon as being maſters and miſſes, they ſhould be aſſiſted as being helpleſs *. They will not feel their vanity flattered by this attendance; the maid will not be ſuffered to amuſe them, they will be ambitious of independence, and they will ſoon be proud of doing every thing for themſelves.

Another circumſtance which keeps children long in ſubjection to ſervants is their not being able to wield a knife, fork, or ſpoon, with decent dexterity. Such habits are taught to them by the careleſs maids who feed them, that they cannot for many years be produced even at the ſide-table without much inconvenience, and conſtant anxiety. If this anxiety in a mother were to begin a little ſooner, it need never be intenſe; patient care in feeding children neatly at firſt, will ſave many a bitter reprimand afterwards; their little mouths and hands need not be diſguſting at their meals, and their nurſes had better take care not to let them touch what is diſ-

* Rouſſeau.

agreeable,

agreeable, inſtead of rubbing their lips rudely with a rough napkin by way of making them love to have their mouths clean. Theſe minutiæ muſt, in ſpite of didactic dignity, be noticed, becauſe they lead to things of greater conſequence; they are well worth the attention of a prudent mother or governeſs. If children are early taught to eat with care, they will not from falſe ſhame deſire to dine* with the vulgar indulgent nurſery maid, rather than with the faſtidious company at their mother's table. Children ſhould firſt be taught to eat with a ſpoon what has been neatly cut for them; afterwards they ſhould cut a little meat for themſelves towards the end of danger, when the rage of hunger is appeaſed; they will then have "leiſure to be good." The ſeveral operations of learning to eat with a ſpoon, to cut and to eat with a knife and fork, will become eaſy and habitual if ſufficient time be allowed.

Several children in a family, who were early attended to in all theſe little particulars, were produced at table when they were four or five years old; they ſuffered no conſtraint, nor were they ever baniſhed to the nurſery leſt *company* ſhould detect their evil habits. Their eyes and ears were at liberty during the time of dinner, and inſtead of being abſorbed in the contemplation of their plates, and at war with themſelves and their neighbours, they could liſten to converſation, and were amuſed even whilſt they were eating. Without meaning to aſſert, with Rouſſeau, that all children are naturally gluttons or epicures, we muſt obſerve that eating is their firſt great and natural pleaſure; this pleaſure ſhould therefore be *entirely* at the diſpoſal of thoſe who have the care of their education; it ſhould be aſſociated with the idea of their tutors or governeſſes. A governeſs may perhaps diſdain to uſe the ſame means

* V. Sancho Panza.

to

to make herſelf beloved by a child as thoſe which are employed by a nurſery maid; nor is it meant that children ſhould be governed by their love of eating. Eating need not be made a reward, nor ſhould we reſtrain their appetite as a puniſhment; praiſe and blame, and a variety of other excitements, muſt be preferred when we want to act upon the heart or underſtanding. Upon this ſubject we ſhall ſpeak more fully hereafter. All that is here meant to be pointed out is, that the mere phyſical pleaſure of eating ſhould not be aſſociated in the minds of children with ſervants; it ſhould not be at the diſpoſal of ſervants, becauſe they may in ſome degree balance by this pleaſure the other motives which a tutor may wiſh to put in action. "Solid pudding," as well as "empty praiſe," ſhould be in the gift of the preceptor.

Beſides the pleaſures of the table, there are many others which uſually are aſſociated early with ſervants. After children have been pent in a cloſe formal drawing-room, motionleſs and mute, they are frequently diſmiſſed to an apartment where there is no furniture too fine to be touched with impunity, where there is ample ſpace, where they may jump and ſing, and make as much noiſe as can be borne by the much-enduring ear-drum of the nurſery-maid. Children think this inſenſibility of ear a moſt valuable qualification in any perſon; they have no ſympathy with more refined auditory nerves, and they prefer the company of thoſe who are to them the beſt hearers. A medium between their taſte and that of their parents ſhould in this inſtance be ſtruck; parents ſhould not inſiſt upon eternal ſilence, and children ſhould not be ſuffered to make mere noiſe eſſential to their entertainment. Children ſhould be encouraged to talk at proper times, and ſhould have occupations provided for them when they are required to be ſtill; by theſe

means it will not be a reſtraint to them to ſtay in the ſame room with the reſt of the family for ſome hours in the day. At other times they ſhould have free leave to run about either in rooms where they cannot diſturb others, or out of doors; in neither caſe ſhould they be with ſervants. Children ſhould never be ſent out to walk with ſervants.

After they have been poring over their leſſons, or ſtiffening under the eye of their preceptors, they are frequently conſigned immediately to the ready footman; they cluſter round him for their hats, their gloves, their little boots and whips, and all the well known ſignals of pleaſure. The hall door burſts open, and they ſally forth under the interregnum of this beloved protector to enjoy life and liberty; all the natural, and all the factitious ideas of the love of liberty, are connected with this diſtinct part of the day; the freſh air—the green fields—the buſy ſtreets—the gay ſhops—the variety of objects which the children ſee and hear—the freedom of their tongues—the joys of bodily exerciſe, and of mental relaxation, all conſpire to make them prefer this period of the day, which they ſpend with the footman, to any other in the four and twenty hours. The footman ſees, and is flattered by this; he is therefore aſſiduous to pleaſe, and piques himſelf upon being more indulgent than the hated preceptor. Servants uſually wiſh to make themſelves beloved by children; can it be wondered at if they ſucceed, when we conſider the power that is thrown into their hands?

In towns, children have no gardens, no place where they can take that degree of exerciſe which is neceſſary for their health; this tempts their parents to truſt them to ſervants, when they cannot walk with them themſelves; but is there no individual in the family,

family, neither tutor, nor governeſs, nor friend, nor brother, nor ſiſter, who can undertake this daily charge? Cannot parents ſacrifice ſome of their amuſements in town, or cannot they live in the country? If none of theſe things can be done, without heſitation they ſhould prefer a public to a private education. In theſe circumſtances they cannot educate their children at home; they had much better not attempt it, but ſend them at once to ſchool.

In the country, arrangements may eaſily be made, which will preclude all thoſe little dangers which fill a prudent parent's mind with anxiety. Here children want the care of no ſervant to walk out with them; they can have gardens, and ſafe places for exerciſe allotted to them. In rainy weather they can have rooms apart from the reſt of the family, they need not be cooped up in an ill-contrived houſe, where ſervants are perpetually in their way.

Attention to the arrangement of a houſe is of material conſequence. Children's rooms ſhould not be paſſage rooms for ſervants; they ſhould, on the contrary, be ſo ſituated, that ſervants cannot eaſily have acceſs to them, and cannot on any pretence of buſineſs get the habit of frequenting them. Some fixed employment ſhould be provided for children, which will keep them in a different part of the houſe at thoſe hours when ſervants muſt neceſſarily be in their bedchambers. There will be a great advantage in teaching children to arrange their own rooms, becauſe this will prevent the neceſſity of ſervants being for any length of time in their apartments; their things will not be miſlaid; their playthings will not be ſwept away or broken; no little temptations will ariſe to aſk queſtions from ſervants; all neceſſity, and all opportunity of intercourſe, will thus be cut off. Children ſhould never be ſent with

meſſages to ſervants, either on their own buſineſs, or on other people's; if they are permitted any times to ſpeak to them, they will not diſtinguiſh what times are proper, and what are improper.

Servants have ſo much the habit of talking to children, and think it ſuch a proof of good-nature to be intereſted about them, that it will be difficult to make them ſubmit to this total ſilence and ſeparation. The certainty, that they ſhall loſe their places if they break through the regulations of the family, will, however, be a ſtrong motive, provided always that their places are agreeable and advantageous; and parents ſhould be abſolutely ſtrict in this particular. What is the loſs of the ſervice of a good groom, or a good butler, compared with the danger of ſpoiling a child? It may be feared that ſome *ſecret* intercourſe ſhould be carried on between children and ſervants; but this will be leſſened by the arrangements in the houſe which we have mentioned; by care in a mother or governeſs to know exactly where children are, and what they are doing every hour of the day; this need not be a daily anxiety, for when certain hours have once been fixed for certain occupations, habit is our friend, and we cannot have a ſafer. There is this great advantage in meaſures of precaution and prevention, that they diminiſh all temptation, at the ſame time that they ſtrengthen the habits of obedience.

Other circumſtances will deter ſervants from running any hazard themſelves; they will not be ſo fond of children who do not live with them; they will conſider them as beings moving in a different ſphere. Children who are at eaſe with their parents, and happy in their company, will not ſeek inferior ſociety; this will be attributed to pride by ſervants, who will not like them for this reſerve.

ſerve. So much the better. Children who are encouraged to converſe about every thing that intereſts them, will naturally tell their mothers if any one talks to them; a ſervant's ſpeaking to them would be an extraordinary event to be recorded in the hiſtory of the day. The idea that it is diſhonourable to tell tales ſhould never be put into their minds; they will never be the ſpies of ſervants, nor ſhould they keep their ſecrets. Thus, as there is no faith expected from the children, the ſervants will not truſt them; they will be certain of detection, and will not tranſgreſs the laws.

It may not be impertinent to conclude theſe minute precepts with aſſuring parents, that in a numerous family, where they have for above twenty years been ſteadily obſerved, ſucceſs has been the uniform reſult.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER V.

ACQUAINTANCE.

" The charming little dears !" exclaims a civil acquaintance the moment the children are introduced. " Won't you come to me, " love ?" At this queſtion, perhaps, the baſhful child backs towards its nurſe, or its mother ; but in vain. Rejected at this trying criſis by its natural protectors, it is puſhed forwards into the middle of the circle, and all proſpect of retreat being cut off, the victorious ſtranger ſeizes upon her little victim, whom ſhe ſeats without a ſtruggle upon her lap. To win the affections of her captive the lady begins by a direct appeal to perſonal vanity. "Who " curls this pretty hair of yours, my dear ? Won't you let me " look at your nice new red ſhoes ? What ſhall I give you for " that fine colour in your cheeks ? Let us ſee what we can find " in my pocket ?"

Amongſt the pocket bribes, the lady never fails to ſelect the moſt uſeleſs trinkets ; the child would make a better choice, for if there ſhould appear a pocket-book, which may be drawn up by a ribbon from its ſlip caſe, a ſcreen that would unfold gradually into a green ſtar, a pocket-fan, or a toothpick-caſe with a ſpring lock, the child would ſeize upon theſe with delight ; but the moment its affection is fixed, it is interrupted by the officious exclamation of " Oh let

" me

" me do that for you, love! Let me open that for you, you'll " break your ſweet little nails. Ha! there is a looking-glaſs; " whoſe pretty face is that? but we don't love people for being " pretty, you know; (mamma ſays I muſt not tell you you are " pretty) but we love little girls for being good, and I am ſure you " look as if you were never naughty. I am ſure you don't know " what it is to be naughty; will you give me one kiſs? and will " you hold out your pretty little hand for ſome ſugar-plums? " Mamma ſhakes her head, but mamma will not be angry, though " mamma can refuſe you nothing, I'll anſwer for it. Who ſpoils " you? Whoſe favourite are you? Who do you love beſt in the " world? and will you love me? and will you come and live " with me? Shall I carry you away in the coach with me to- " night? Oh! but I'm afraid I ſhould eat you up, and then what " would mamma ſay to us both?"

To ſtop this torrent of nonſenſe, the child's mother, perhaps, ventures to interfere with, " My dear, I'm afraid you'll be trou- " bleſome." But this produces only vehement aſſertions of the contrary. " The dear little creature can never be troubleſome to " any body." Woe be to the child who implicitly believes this aſ- ſertion! frequent rebuffs from his *friends* muſt be endured before this error will be thoroughly rectified: this will not tend to make thoſe friends more agreeable, or more beloved. That childiſh love, which varies from hour to hour, is ſcarcely worth conſideration; it cannot be an object of competition to any reaſonable perſon, but in early education nothing muſt be thought beneath our attention. A child does not retain much affection, it is true, for every caſual viſitor by whom he is flattered and careſſed. The individuals are here to-day, and gone to-morrow; variety prevents the impreſſion

from

from ſinking into the mind, it may be ſaid; but the general impreſſion remains, though each particular ſtroke is not ſeen. Young children, who are much careſſed in company, are leſs intent than others upon pleaſing thoſe they live with, and they are alſo leſs independent in their occupations and pleaſures. Thoſe who govern ſuch pupils have not ſufficient power over them, becauſe they have not the means of giving pleaſure; becauſe their praiſe or blame is frequently counteracted by the applauſe of viſitors. That unbroken courſe of experience, which is neceſſary for the ſucceſs of a regular plan of education, cannot be preſerved. Every body may have obſerved the effect, which the extraordinary notice of ſtrangers produces upon children. After the day is over, and the company has left the houſe, there is a cold blank; a melancholy ſilence. The children then ſink into themſelves, and feel the mortifying change in their ſituation. They look with diſlike upon every thing round them; yawn with ennui, or fidget with fretfulneſs, till on the firſt check which they meet with, their ſecret diſcontent burſts forth into a ſtorm. Reſiſtance, caprice, and peeviſhneſs, are not borne with patience by a governeſs, though they are ſubmitted to with ſmiles by the complaiſant viſitor. In the ſame day, the ſame conduct produces totally different conſequences. Experience, it is ſaid, makes fools wiſe, but ſuch experience as this would make wiſe children fools.

Why is this farce of civility, which diſguſts all parties, continually repeated between viſitors and children? Viſitors would willingly be excuſed from the trouble of flattering and ſpoiling them; but ſuch is the ſpell of cuſtom, that no one dares to break it, even when every one feels that it is abſurd.

Children who are thought to be clever are often produced to entertain company; they fill up the time, and relieve the circle from that embarraſſing ſilence, which proceeds from the having nothing to ſay. Boys, who are thus brought forward at ſix or ſeven years old, and encouraged to ſay what are called *ſmart* things, ſeldom as they grow up have really good underſtandings. Children, who, like the fools in former times, are permitted to ſay every thing, now and then blurt out thoſe ſimple truths which politeneſs conceals: this entertains people, but, in fact, it is a ſort of *naiveté*, which may exiſt without any great talent for obſervation, and without any powers of reaſoning. Every thing in our manners, in the cuſtoms of the world, is new to children, and the relations of apparently diſſimilar things ſtrike them immediately from their novelty. Children are often witty, without knowing it, or rather without intending it; but as they grow older, the ſame kind of wit does not pleaſe; the ſame objects do not appear in the ſame point of view; and boys who have been the delight of a whole houſe at ſeven or eight years old, for the ſmart things they could ſay, ſink into ſtupidity and deſpondency at thirteen or fourteen. "Un nom trop tot fameux eſt un fardeau très peſant," ſaid a celebrated wit.

Plain, ſober ſenſe does not entertain common viſitors, and children whoſe minds are occupied, and who are not ambitious of exhibiting themſelves for the entertainment of the company, will not in general pleaſe. So much the better, they will eſcape many dangers; not only the dangers of flattery, but alſo the dangers of nonſenſe. Few people know how to converſe with children; they talk to them of things that are above, or below, their underſtandings; if they argue with them, they do not reaſon fairly, they

ſilence them with ſentiment, or with authority; or elſe they baffle them by wit, or by unintelligible terms. They often attempt to try their capacities with quibbles and ſilly puzzles. Children, who are expert at anſwering theſe, have rarely been well educated: the extreme ſimplicity of ſenſible children will ſurpriſe thoſe who have not been accuſtomed to it, and many will be provoked by their inaptitude to underſtand the common-place wit of converſation.

"How many ſticks go to a rook's neſt?" ſaid a gentleman to a boy of ſeven years old; he looked very grave, and having pondered upon the queſtion for ſome minutes, anſwered, "I do not "know what you mean by the word go." Fortunately for the boy, the gentleman who aſked the queſtion was not a captious queriſt; he perceived the good ſenſe of this anſwer; he perceived that the boy had exactly hit upon the ambiguous word which was puzzling to the underſtanding, and he ſaw that this ſhewed more capacity, than could have been ſhewn by the parrying of a thouſand witticiſms. We have ſeen S——, a remarkably intelligent boy of nine years old, ſtand with the moſt puzzled face imaginable, conſidering for a long half hour the common quibble of "There was "a carpenter who made a door; he made it too large; he cut it "and cut it, and he cut it *too little*; he cut it again, and it fitted." S—— ſhewed very little ſatisfaction, when he at length diſcovered the double meaning of the words "too little;" but ſimply ſaid, "I did not know you meant that the carpenter cut *too little* "*off* the door."

"Which has moſt legs, a horſe or no horſe?" "A horſe has more legs than no horſe," replies the unwary child. "But," con-

tinues the witty ſophiſt, "a horſe, ſurely, has but four legs; did you ever ſee a horſe with five legs?" "Never," ſays the child; "no horſe has five legs." "Oh, Ho!" exclaims the entrapper, "I have you "now! No horſe has five legs, you ſay; then you muſt acknow- "ledge that no horſe has more legs than *a* horſe. Therefore, "when I aſked you which has moſt legs, *a horſe* or *no horſe*, your "anſwer, you ſee, ſhould have been, *no horſe*."

The famous dilemma of "you have what you have not loſt; you have not loſt horns; then you have horns;" is much in the ſame ſtyle of reaſoning. Children may readily be taught to chop logic, and to parry their adverſaries technically in this conteſt of falſe wit; but this will not improve their underſtandings, though it may to ſuperficial judges give them the appearance of great quickneſs of intellect. We ſhould not *even* in jeſt talk nonſenſe to children, or ſuffer them *even* to hear inaccurate language. If confuſed anſwers be given to their queſtions, they will ſoon be content with a confuſed notion of things; they will be ſatisfied with bad reaſoning, if they are not taught to diſtinguiſh it ſcrupulouſly from what is good, and to reject it ſteadily. Half the expreſſions current in converſation have merely a nominal value; they repreſent no ideas, and they paſs merely by common courteſy: but the language of every perſon of ſenſe has ſterling value; it cheats and puzzles nobody, and even when it is addreſſed to children, it is made intelligible. No common acquaintance, who talks to a child merely for his own amuſement, ſelects his expreſſions with any care; what becomes of the child afterwards is no part of his concern, he does not conſider the advantage of clear explanations to the underſtanding, or would he be at the pains of explaining any thing thoroughly, even if he were able to do ſo. And how few

people

people are able to explain distinctly, even when they most wish to make themselves understood!

The following conversation passed between a learned doctor, (formerly) of the Sorbonne, and a boy of seven years old.

Doctor. So, Sir, I see you are very advanced already in your studies. You are quite expert at Latin. Pray, Sir, allow me to ask you; I suppose you have heard of Tully's Offices?

Boy. Tully's Offices! No, Sir.

Doctor. No matter. You can, I will venture to say, solve me the following question. It is not very difficult, but it has puzzled some abler casuists, I can tell you, though, than you or I; but if you will lend me your attention for a very few moments, I flatter myself, I shall make myself intelligible to you.

The boy began to stiffen at this exordium, but he fixed himself in an attitude of anxious attention, and the doctor, after having taken two pinches of snuff, proceeded.

"In the island of Rhodes there was once, formerly, a great "scarcity of provisions, a famine quite; and some merchants "fitted out ten ships to relieve the Rhodians: and one of the "merchants got into port sooner than the others; and he took "advantage of this circumstance to sell his goods at an exorbitant "rate, finding himself in possession of the market. The Rhodians "did not know that the other ships laden with provisions were to "be in the next day; and they of course paid this merchant "whatsoever

" whatſoever price he thought proper to demand. Now the " queſtion is, in morality, whether did he act the part of an " honeſt man in this buſineſs by the Rhodians? Or ſhould he not " rather have informed them of the nine ſhips which were ex- " pected to come with proviſions to the market the enſuing " day?"

The boy was ſilent, and did not appear to comprehend the ſtory or the queſtion in the leaſt. In telling his ſtory, the doctor of the Sorbonne unluckily pronounced the words *ſhip* and *ſhips* in ſuch a manner, that the child all along miſtook them for *ſheep* and *ſheeps*; and this miſtake threw every thing into confuſion. Beſides this, a number of terms were made uſe of which were quite new to the boy. Getting into port—being in poſſeſſion of the market—ſelling goods at an exorbitant rate; together with the whole myſtery of buying and ſelling, were as new to him, and appeared to him as difficult to be underſtood, as the moſt abſtract metaphyſics. He did not even know what was meant by the ſhips being expected *in* the next day; and " *acting the part* of an honeſt man," was to him an unuſual mode of expreſſion. The young caſuiſt made no hand of this caſe of conſcience; when at laſt he attempted an anſwer, he only expoſed himſelf to the contempt of the learned doctor. When he was deſired to repeat the ſtory, he made a ſtrange jumble about ſome people who wanted to get ſome *ſheep*, and about one man who got in his ſheep before the other nine ſheep; but he did not know how or why it was wrong in him not to tell of the other ſheep. Nor could he imagine, why the *Rhodians* could not get ſheep without this man. He had never had any idea of a fa- mine. This boy's father, unwilling that he ſhould retire to reſt with his intellects in this ſtate of confuſion, as ſoon as the doctor had

had taken leave, told the ſtory to the child in different words, to try whether it was the words or the ideas that puzzled him.

" In the Ægean ſea, which you ſaw the other day in the map, " there is an iſland, which is called the iſland of Rhodes. In telling " my ſtory, I take the opportunity to fix a point in geography in " your memory. In the Ægean ſea there is an iſland which is called " the iſland of Rhodes. There was once a famine in this iſland, " that is to ſay, the people had not food enough to live upon, and " they were afraid that they ſhould be ſtarved to death. Now, ſome " merchants who lived on the continent of Greece, filled ten ſhips " with proviſions, and they ſailed in theſe veſſels for the iſland of " Rhodes. It happened that one of theſe ſhips got to the iſland " ſooner than any of the others. It was evening, and the captain " of this ſhip knew that the others could not arrive till the morn- " ing. Now the people of Rhodes, being extremely hungry, were " very eager to buy the proviſions which this merchant had " brought to ſell; and they were ready to give a great deal " more money for proviſions than they would have done if they " had not been almoſt ſtarved. There was not nearly a ſufficient " quantity of food in this one ſhip, to ſupply all the people who " wanted food; and therefore thoſe who had money, and who " knew that the merchant wanted as much money as he could " get in exchange for his proviſions, offered to give him a large " price, the price which he aſked for them. Had theſe people " known that nine other ſhips full of proviſions would arrive " in the morning, they would not have been ready to give ſo " much money for food, becauſe they would not have been ſo " much afraid of being ſtarved; and they would have known " that, in exchange for their money, they could have a greater

" quantity

" quantity of food the next day. The merchant, however, did " not tell them that any ſhips were expected to arrive, and he " conſequently got a great deal more of their money than he " would have done for his proviſions, if he had told them the fact " which he knew, and which they did not know. Do you think " that he did right or wrong?"

The child, who now had rather more the expreſſion of intelligence in his countenance, than he had when the ſame queſtion had been put to him after the former ſtatement of the caſe, immediately anſwered, that he " thought the merchant had done " wrong, that he ſhould have told the people that more ſhips " were to come in the morning." Several different opinions were given afterwards by other children, and grown people who were aſked the ſame queſtion; and what had been an unintelligible ſtory, was rendered, by a little more ſkill and patience in the art of explanation, an excellent leſſon, or rather exerciſe, in reaſoning.

It is ſcarcely poſſible that a ſtranger, who ſees a child only for a few hours, can gueſs what he knows, and what he does not know; or can he perceive the courſe of his thoughts, which depend upon aſſociations over which he has no command; therefore, when a ſtranger, let his learning and abilities be what they will, attempts to teach children, he uſually puzzles them, and the conſequences of the confuſion of mind he creates laſt ſometimes for years: ſometimes it influences their moral, ſometimes their ſcientific reaſoning. " Every body but my friends," ſaid a little girl of ſix years old, " tell me I am very pretty." From this contradictory evidence what muſt the child have inferred? The perplexity which ſome young

young people, almoſt arrived at the years of diſcretion, have ſhewn in their firſt notions of mathematics, has been a matter of aſtoniſhment to thoſe who have attempted to teach them; this perplexity has been at length diſcovered to ariſe from their having early confounded in their minds the ideas of a triangle, and an angle. In the moſt common modes of expreſſion there are often ſtrange inaccuracies, which do not ſtrike us, becauſe they are familiar to us; but children, who hear them for the firſt time, detect their abſurdity, and are frequently anxious to have ſuch phraſes explained. If they converſe much with idle viſitors, they will ſeldom be properly applauded for their preciſion, and their philoſophic curioſity will often be repreſſed by unmeaning replies. Children, who have the habit of applying to their parents, or to ſenſible preceptors, in ſimilar difficulties, will be ſomewhat better received, and will gain rather more accurate information. S—— (nine years old) was in a houſe where a chimney was on fire; he ſaw a great buſtle, and he heard the ſervants, and people, as they ran backwards and forwards, all exclaim, that "the chimney was on fire." After the fire was put out, and when the buſtle was over, S—— ſaid to his father, "What do people mean when they ſay *the chimney is on* "*fire?* What is it that burns?" At this queſtion a ſilly acquaintance would probably have laughed in the boy's face, would have expreſſed aſtoniſhment as ſoon as his viſit was over at ſuch an inſtance of ſtrange ignorance in a boy of nine years old; or, if civility had prompted any anſwer, it would perhaps have been, "The chimney's being on fire, my love, means that the chim-"ney's on fire! Every body knows what's meant by 'the chim-"ney's on fire!' There's a great deal of ſmoke, and ſparks, and "flame, coming out at the top, you know, when the chimney's "on fire. And it's extremely dangerous, and it would ſet a houſe "on fire, or perhaps the whole neighbourhood, if it was not put

" out immediately. Many dreadful fires, you know, happen in
" towns, as we hear for ever in the newſpaper, by a chimney's
" taking fire. Did you never hear of a chimney's being on fire
" before? You are a very happy young gentleman to have lived
" to your time of life, and to be ſtill at a loſs about ſuch a thing.
" What burns? Why, my dear Sir, the chimney burns; fire burns
" in the chimney. To be ſure fires are ſad accidents; many lives
" are loſt by them every day. I had a chimney on fire in my
" drawing room laſt year."

Thus would the child's curioſity have been baffled by a number of words without meaning or connexion; on the contrary, when he applied to a father, who was intereſted in his improvement, his ſenſible queſtion was liſtened to with approbation. He was told that the chimney's being on fire, was an inaccurate common expreſſion; that it was the ſoot in the chimney, not the chimney that burned; that the ſoot was ſometimes ſet on fire by ſparks of fire, ſometimes by flame, which might have been accidentally *drawn up* the chimney. Some of the ſoot which had been ſet on fire was ſhewn to him; the nature of burning in general, the manner in which the chimney *draws*, the meaning of that expreſſion, and many other things connected with the ſubject were explained upon this occaſion to the inquiſitive boy, who was thus encouraged to think and ſpeak accurately, and to apply in ſimilar difficulties to the friend who had thus taken the trouble to underſtand his ſimple queſtion. A random anſwer to a child's queſtion does him a real injury; but can we expect that thoſe, who have no intereſt in education, ſhould have the patience to correct their whole converſation, and to adapt it preciſely to the capacity of children? This would indeed be unreaſonable; all we can do is, to keep our pupils out of the way of

thoſe who *can* do them no good, and who may do them a great deal of harm. We muſt prefer the permanent advantage of our pupils, to the tranſient vanity of exhibiting for the amuſement of company their early wit or "lively nonſenſe." Children ſhould never be introduced for the amuſement of the circle; or yet ſhould they be condemned to ſit ſtock ſtill, holding up their heads and letting their feet dangle from chairs that are too high for them, merely that they may appear what is called *well* before viſitors. Whenever any converſation is going forward which they can underſtand, they ſhould be kindly ſummoned to partake of the pleaſures of ſociety; its pains and its follies we may ſpare them. The manners of young people will not be injured by this arrangement; they will be at eaſe in company, becauſe whenever they are introduced into it they will make a part of it, they will be intereſted and happy, they will feel a proper confidence in themſelves, and they will not be intent upon their curtſies, their frocks, their manner of holding their hands, or turning out their toes, the proper placing of Sir, Madam, or your Ladyſhip, with all the other innumerable trifles, which embarraſs the imagination, and conſequently the manners, of thoſe who are taught to think that they are to ſit ſtill, and behave in company ſome way differently from what they behave every day in their own family.

We have hitherto only ſpoken of acquaintance who do not attempt or deſire to interfere in education, but who only careſs and talk nonſenſe to children with the beſt intentions poſſible: with theſe parents will find it comparatively eaſy to manage; they can contrive to employ children, or ſend them out to walk; by cool reſerve they can readily diſcourage ſuch viſitors from flattering their children, and by inſiſting upon becoming a party in all con-

verſations which are addreſſed to their pupils, they can, in a great meaſure, prevent the bad effects of inaccurate or imprudent converſation; they can explain to their pupils what was left unintelligible, and they can counteract falſe aſſociations, either at the moment they perceive them, or at ſome well choſen opportunity. But there is a claſs of acquaintance with whom it will be more difficult to manage; perſons who are perhaps on an intimate footing with the family, who are valued for their agreeable talents and eſtimable qualities; who are perhaps perſons of general information and good ſenſe, and who may yet never have conſidered the ſubject of education; or who, having partially conſidered it, have formed ſome peculiar and erroneous opinions. They will feel themſelves entitled to talk upon education as well as upon any other topic; they will hazard, and they will ſupport, opinions; they will be eager to prove the truth of their aſſertions, or the ſuperiority of their favourite theories. Out of pure regard for their friends, they will endeavour to bring them over to their own way of thinking in education; and they will by looks, by hints, by inuendos, unreſtrained by the preſence of the children, inſinuate their advice and their judgment upon every domeſtic occurrence. In the heat of debate people frequently forget that children have eyes and ears, or any portion of underſtanding; they are not aware of the quickneſs of that comprehenſion, which is excited by the motives of curioſity and ſelf love. It is dangerous to let children be preſent at any arguments, in which the management of their minds is concerned, until they can perfectly underſtand the whole of the ſubject: they will, if they catch but a few words, or a few ideas, imagine perhaps, that there is ſomething wrong, ſome hardſhips, ſome injuſtice, practiſed againſt them by their friends; yet they will not diſtinctly know, or will they perhaps explicitly

plicitly inquire what it is. They ſhould be ſent out of the room before any ſuch arguments are begun; or, if the converſation be abruptly begun before parents can be upon their guard, they may yet, without offending againſt the common forms of politeneſs, decline entering into any diſcuſſion till their children are withdrawn. As to any direct attempt practically to interfere with the children's education, by blame or praiſe, by preſents, by books, or by converſation; theſe ſhould, and really muſt, be reſolutely and ſteadily reſiſted by parents; this will require ſome ſtrength of mind. What can be done without it? Many people, who are convinced of the danger of the interference of friends and acquaintance in the education of their children, will yet, from the fear of offending, from the dread of being thought ſingular, ſubmit to the evil. Theſe perſons may be very well received, and very well liked in the world: they muſt content themſelves with this reward; they muſt not expect to ſucceed in education, for ſtrength of mind is abſolutely neceſſary to thoſe who would carry a plan of education into effect. Without being tied down to any one excluſive plan, and with univerſal toleration for different modes of moral and intellectual inſtruction, it may be ſafely aſſerted, that the plan which is moſt ſteadily purſued will probably ſucceed the beſt. People, who are moved by the advice of all their friends, and who endeavour to adapt their ſyſtem to every faſhionable change in opinion, will inevitably repent of their weak complaiſance; they will loſe all power over their pupils, and will be forced to abandon the education of their families to chance.

It will be found impoſſible to educate a child at home, unleſs all interference from viſitors and acquaintance is precluded. But it is of yet more conſequence, that the members of the family muſt entirely

entirely agree in their ſentiments, or at leaſt in the conduct of the children under their care. Without this there is no hope. Young people perceive very quickly, whether there is unanimity in their government; they make out an alphabet of looks with unerring preciſion, and decipher with amazing ingenuity all that is for their intereſt to underſtand. When children are blamed or puniſhed, they always know pretty well who pities them, who thinks that they are in the wrong, and who thinks that they are in the right; and thus the influence of public opinion is what ultimately governs. If children find that, when mamma is diſpleaſed, grandmamma comforts them, they will conſole themſelves readily under this partial diſgrace, and they will ſuſpect others of caprice, inſtead of ever blaming themſelves. They will feel little confidence in their own experience, or in the aſſertions of others; they will think that there is always ſome chance of eſcape amongſt the multitude of laws and lawgivers. No tutor or preceptor can be anſwerable, or ought *to undertake to anſwer for meaſures which he does not guide*. Le Sage, with an inimitable mixture of humour and good ſenſe, in the ſhort hiſtory of the education of the robbers who ſupped in that cave in which dame Leonardo officiated, has given many excellent leſſons in education. Captain Rolando's tutors could never make any thing of him, becauſe, whenever they reprimanded him, he ran to his mother, father, and grandfather, for conſolation; and from them conſtantly received protection in rebellion, and commiſeration for the wounds which he had inflicted upon his own hands and face, purpoſely to excite compaſſion, and to obtain revenge.

It is obviouſly impoſſible, that all the world, the ignorant and the well informed, the man of genius, the man of faſhion, and the man

man of buſineſs, the pedant and the philoſopher, ſhould agree in their opinion upon any ſpeculative ſubject; upon the wide ſubject of education they will probably differ eternally. It will therefore be thought abſurd to require this union of opinion amongſt the individuals of a family; but, let there be ever ſo much difference in their private opinions, they can ſurely diſcuſs any diſputed point at leiſure, when children are abſent, or they can in theſe arguments converſe in French, or in ſome language which their pupils do not underſtand. The ſame caution ſhould be obſerved, as we juſt now recommended, with reſpect to acquaintance. It is much better, when any difficulties occur, to ſend the children at once into another room, and to tell them that we do ſo becauſe we have ſomething to ſay that we do not wiſh them to hear, than to make falſe excuſes to get rid of their company, or to begin whiſpering and diſputing in their preſence.

Theſe precautions are adviſable whilſt our pupils are young, before they are capable of comprehending arguments of this nature, and whilſt their paſſions are vehemently intereſted on one ſide or the other. As young people grow up, the greater variety of opinions they hear upon all ſubjects the better; they will then form the habit of judging for themſelves: whilſt they are very young they have not the means of forming correct judgments upon abſtract ſubjects, or are theſe the ſubjects upon which their judgment can be properly exerciſed: upon the ſubject of education they cannot be competent judges, becauſe they cannot till they are nearly educated have a complete view of the means, or of the end; beſides this, no *man* is allowed to be judge in his own caſe.

Some parents allow their children a vaſt deal of liberty whilſt

they are young, and reſtrain them by abſolute authority when their reaſon is or ought to be a ſufficient guide for their conduct. The contrary practice will make parents much more beloved, and will make children both wiſer and happier. Let no idle viſitor, no intruſive, injudicious friend, for one moment interfere to leſſen the authority neceſſary for the purpoſes of education. Let no weak jealouſy, no unſeaſonable love of command, reſtrain young people after they are ſufficiently reaſonable to judge for themſelves. In the choice of their friends, their acquaintance, in all the great and ſmall affairs of life, let them have liberty in proportion as they acquire reaſon. Fathers do not commonly interfere with their ſons amuſements, or with the choice of their acquaintance, ſo much as in the regulation of their pecuniary affairs; but mothers, who have had any conſiderable ſhare in the education of boys, are apt to make miſtakes as to the proper ſeaſons for indulgence and control. They do not watch the moments when dangerous prejudices and taſtes begin to be formed, they do not perceive how the ſlight converſations of acquaintance operate upon the ever open ear of childhood; but when the age of paſſion approaches, and approaches, as it uſually does, in ſtorms and tempeſt, then all their maternal fears are ſuddenly rouſed, and their anxiety prompts them to uſe a thouſand injudicious and ineffectual expedients.

A modern princeſs, who had taken conſiderable pains in the education of her ſon, made both herſelf and him ridiculous by her anxiety upon his introduction into the world. She travelled about with him from place to place, to *make him ſee* every thing worth ſeeing; but he was not to ſtir from her preſence; ſhe could not bear to have him out of ſight or hearing. In all companies he was *chaperoned* by his mother. Was he invited to a ball, ſhe muſt be

invited

invited alſo, or he could not accept of the invitation; he muſt go in the ſame coach, and return in the ſame coach with her. "I ſhould "like extremely to dance another dance," ſaid he one evening to his partner, "but you ſee I muſt go; my mother is putting on "her cloak." The tall young man called for ſome negus, and had the glaſs at his lips, when his mamma called out in a ſhrill voice, through a viſta of heads, "Eh! My ſon no drink wine! "My ſon like milk and water!" The ſon was at this time at years of diſcretion.

CHAPTER VI.

ON TEMPER.

We have already, in ſpeaking of the early care of infants, ſuggeſted that the temper ſhould be attended to from the moment of their birth. A negligent, a careleſs, a paſſionate ſervant, muſt neceſſarily injure the temper of a child. The firſt language of an infant is intelligible only to its nurſe; ſhe can diſtinguiſh between the cry of pain and the note of ill-humour, or the roar of paſſion. The cry of pain ſhould be liſtened to with the utmoſt care, and every poſſible means ſhould be uſed to relieve the child's ſufferings: but when it is obvious that he cries from ill-humour, a nurſe ſhould not ſoothe him with looks of affection, theſe ſhe ſhould reſerve for the moment when the ſtorm is over. We do not mean that infants ſhould be ſuffered to cry for a length of time without being regarded; this would give them habits of ill-humour: we only wiſh that the nurſe would, as ſoon as poſſible, teach the child that what he wants can be obtained without his putting himſelf in a paſſion. Great care ſhould be taken to prevent occaſions for ill-humour; if a nurſe neglects her charge, or if ſhe be herſelf paſſionate, the child will ſuffer ſo much pain, and ſo many diſappointments, that it muſt be in a continual ſtate of fretfulneſs. An ac-

tive, cheerful, good-humoured, intelligent nurſe, will make a child good humoured by regular affectionate attendance, by endeavouring to prevent all unneceſſary ſufferings, and by quickly comprehending its language of ſigns. The beſt humoured woman in the world, if ſhe is ſtupid, is not fit to have the care of a child; the child will not be able to make her underſtand any thing leſs than vociferation. By way of amuſing the infant, ſhe will fatigue him with her careſſes; without ever diſcovering the real cauſe of his woe, ſhe will ſing one univerſal lullaby upon all occaſions to pacify her charge.

It requires ſome ingenuity to diſcover the cauſe and cure of thoſe long and loud fits of crying, which frequently ariſe from imaginary apprehenſions. A little boy of two years old uſed to cry violently when he wakened in the middle of the night, and ſaw a candle in the room. It was obſerved that the ſhadow of the perſon who was moving about in the room frightened him, and as ſoon as the cauſe of his crying was found out, it was eaſy to pacify him; his fear of ſhadows was effectually cured by playfully ſhewing him at different times that ſhadows had no power to hurt him.

H——, about nine months old when ſhe firſt began to obſerve the hardneſs of bodies, let her hand fall upon a cat which had crept unperceived upon the table; ſhe was ſurpriſed and terrified by the unexpected ſenſation of ſoftneſs; ſhe could not touch the cat, or any thing that felt like ſoft fur, without ſhewing agitation, till ſhe was near four years old, though every gentle means were uſed to conquer her antipathy; the antipathy was, however, cured at laſt, by her having a wooden cat covered with fur for a plaything.

A boy between four and five years old, H——, uſed to cry bitterly when he was left alone in a room in which there were ſome old family pictures. It was found that he was much afraid of theſe pictures: a maid, who took care of him, had terrified him with the notion that they would come to him, or that they were looking at him, and would be angry with him if he was not *good*. To cure this child of his fear of pictures, a ſmall ſized portrait, which was not amongſt the number of thoſe which had frightened him, was produced in broad day light. A piece of cake was put upon this picture, which the boy was deſired to take; he took it, touched the picture, and was ſhewn the canvas at the back of it, which, as it happened to be torn, he could eaſily identify with the painting: the picture was then given to him for a plaything; he made uſe of it as a table, and became very fond of it as ſoon as he was convinced that it was not alive, and that it could do him no ſort of injury.

By patiently endeavouring to diſcover the cauſes of terror in children, we may probably prevent their tempers from acquiring many bad habits. It is ſcarcely poſſible for any one, who has not conſtantly lived with a child, and who has not known the whole riſe and progreſs of his little character, to trace the cauſes of theſe ſtrange apprehenſions; for this reaſon a parent has advantages in the education of his child which no tutor or ſchoolmaſter can have.

A little boy was obſerved to ſhew ſigns of fear and diſlike at hearing the ſound of a drum; to a ſtranger ſuch fear muſt have ſeemed unaccountable, but thoſe who lived with the child knew from what it aroſe. He had been terrified by the ſight of a merry-andrew in a maſk,

a maſk, who had played upon a drum; this was the firſt time that he had ever heard the ſound of a drum; the ſound was aſſociated with fear, and continued to raiſe apprehenſion in the child's mind after he had forgotten the original cauſe of that apprehenſion.

We are well aware that we have laid ourſelves open to ridicule, by the apparently trifling anecdotes which have juſt been mentioned; but if we can ſave one child from an hour's unneceſſary miſery, or one parent from an hour's anxiety, we ſhall bear the laugh, we hope, with good humour.

Young children, who have not a great number of ideas, perhaps for that reaſon aſſociate thoſe which they acquire with tenacity; they cannot reaſon concerning general cauſes; they expect that any event, which has once or twice followed another, will always follow in the ſame order; they do not diſtinguiſh between proximate and remote cauſes, between coincidences and the regular connexion of cauſe and effect; hence children are ſubject to feel hopes and fears from things which to us appear matters of indifference. Suppoſe, for inſtance, that a child is very eager to go out to walk, that his mother puts on her gloves and her cloak, theſe being the uſual ſignals that ſhe is going out, he inſtantly expects, if he has been accuſtomed to accompany her, that he ſhall have the pleaſure of walking out; but if ſhe goes out, and forgets him, he is not only diſappointed at that moment, but the diſappointment, or, at leaſt, ſome indiſtinct apprehenſion, recurs to him when he is in a ſimilar ſituation: the putting on of his mother's cloak and gloves are then circumſtances of vaſt importance to him, and create anxiety, perhaps tears, whilſt to every other ſpectator they are matters of total indifference. Every one, who has had any experience

rience in the education of ſuch children as are apt to form ſtrong aſſociations, muſt be aware that many of thoſe fits of crying, which appear to ariſe ſolely from ill-humour, are occaſioned by aſſociation. When theſe are ſuffered to become habitual, they are extremely difficult to conquer; it is therefore beſt to conquer them as ſoon as poſſible. If a child has, by any accident, been diſpoſed to cry at particular times in the day, without any obvious cauſe, we ſhould at thoſe hours engage his attention, occupy him, change the room he is in, or by any new circumſtance break his habits. It will require ſome penetration to diſtinguiſh between involuntary tears, and tears of caprice; but even when children are really croſs, it is not, whilſt they are very young, prudent to let them wear out their ill-humour, as ſome people do, in total neglect. Children, when they are left to weep in ſolitude, often continue in woe for a conſiderable length of time, till they quite forget the original cauſe of complaint, and they continue their convulſive ſobs, and whining note of diſtreſs, purely from inability to ſtop themſelves.

Thus habits of ill-humour are contracted; it is better, by a little well-timed excitation, to turn the courſe of a child's thoughts, and to make him forget his trivial miſeries. "The tear forgot as ſoon "as ſhed" is far better than the peeviſh whine, or ſullen lowering brow, which proclaims the unconquered ſpirit of diſcontent.

Perhaps, from the anxiety which we have expreſſed to prevent the petty misfortunes, and unneceſſary tears of children, it may be ſuppoſed that we are diſpoſed to humour them; far from it. We know too well that a humoured child is one of the moſt unhappy beings in the world; a burthen to himſelf, and to his friends; capricious, tyrannical, paſſionate, peeviſh, ſullen, and ſelfiſh.

An only child runs a dreadful chance of being ſpoiled. He is born a perſon of conſequence; he ſoon diſcovers his innate merit; every eye is turned upon him the moment he enters the room; his looks, his dreſs, his appetite, are all matters of daily concern to a whole family; his wiſhes are divined; his wants are prevented; his witty ſayings are repeated in his preſence; his ſmiles are courted; his careſſes excite jealouſy, and he ſoon learns how to avail himſelf of his central ſituation. His father and mother make him alternately their idol, and their plaything; they do not think of educating, they only think of admiring him; they imagine that he is unlike all other children in the univerſe, and that his genius and his temper are independent of all cultivation. But when this little paragon of perfection has two or three brothers and ſiſters, the ſcene changes; the man of conſequence dwindles into an inſignificant little boy. We ſhall hereafter explain more fully the danger of accuſtoming children to a large ſhare of our ſympathy; we hope that the economy of kindneſs and careſſes which we have recommended * will be found to increaſe domeſtic affection, and to be eſſentially ſerviceable to the temper. In a future chapter, "On Vanity, Pride, and Ambition," ſome remarks will be found on the uſe and abuſe of the ſtimuli of praiſe, emulation, and ambition. The precautions which we have already mentioned with reſpect to ſervants, and the methods that have been ſuggeſted for inducing habitual and rational obedience, will alſo, we hope, be conſidered as ſerviceable to the temper, as well as to the underſtanding. Perpetual and contradictory commands and prohibitions not only make children diſobedient, but fretful, peeviſh, and paſſionate.

* V. Chapter on Sympathy and Senſibility.

Idleneſs amongſt children, as amongſt men, is the root of all evil, and leads to no evil more certainly than to ill-temper. It is ſaid* that the late king of Spain was always ſo croſs during Paſſion week, when he was obliged to abſtain from his favourite amuſement of hunting, that none of his courtiers liked to approach his majeſty. There is a great ſimilarity between the condition of a prince flattered by his courtiers, and a child humoured by his family; and we may obſerve, that both the child and prince are moſt intolerable to their dependants and friends, when any of their daily amuſements are interrupted. It is not that the amuſements are in themſelves delightful, but the pains and penalties of idleneſs are inſupportable. We have endeavoured to provide a variety of occupations, as well as of amuſements, for our young pupils†, that they may never know the miſery of the Spaniſh monarch. When children are occupied, they are independent of other people, they are not obliged to watch for caſual entertainment from thoſe who happen to be unemployed, or who chance to be in a humour to play with them; they have ſome agreeable object continually in view, and they feel ſatisfied with themſelves. They will not torment every body in the houſe with inceſſant requeſts. "May I "have this? Will you give me that? May I go out to ſee ſuch "a thing? When will it be dinner-time? When will it be tea-"time? When will it be time for me to go to ſupper?" are the impatient queſtions of a child who is fretful from having nothing to do. Idle children are eternal petitioners, and the refuſals they meet with perpetually irritate their temper. With reſpect to requeſts in general, we ſhould either grant immediately what a child

* By Mr. Townſend, in his Travels into Spain.

† V. Chapter on Toys.

desires, or we should give a decided refusal. The state of suspense is not easily borne; the propriety or impropriety of the request should decide us either to grant, or to refuse it; and we should not set the example of caprice, or teach our pupils the arts of courtiers, who watch the humour of tyrants. If we happen to be busy, and a child comes with an eager request about some trifle, it is easy so far to command our temper as to answer, "I am busy, don't talk "to me now," instead of driving the petitioner away with harsh looks, and a peremptory refusal, which make as great an impression as harsh words. If we are reasonable, the child will soon learn to apply to us at proper times. By the same steady, gentle conduct, we may teach him to manage his love of talking with discretion, and may prevent those ineffectual exhortations to silence, which irritate the temper of the vivacious pupil. Expostulations, and angry exclamations, will not so effectually command from our pupils temperance of tongue, as their own conviction that they are more likely to gain attention from their friends, if they choose properly their seasons for conversation.

To prevent, we cannot too often repeat it, is better than to punish, without humouring children; that is to say, without yielding to their caprices, or to their *will*. When they express their wishes with impatience, we may prevent many of those little inconveniences which tease and provoke the temper; any continual irritation exhausts our patience; acute pain can be endured with more fortitude.

We have sometimes seen children become fretful from the constant teasing effect of some slight inconveniences in their dress; we have pitied poor little boys, who were continually exhorted to produce

duce their handkerchiefs, and who could ſcarcely ever get theſe handkerchiefs out of the tight pockets into which they had been ſtuffed; into ſuch pockets the hand can never enter, or withdraw itſelf, without as much difficulty as Trenck had in getting rid of his handcuffs. The torture of tight ſhoes, of back-boards, collars, and ſtocks, we hope, is nearly abandoned; ſurely all theſe are unneceſſary trials of fortitude; they exhauſt that patience which might be exerciſed upon things of conſequence. Count Rumford tells us, that he obſerved a ſtriking melioration in the temper of all the mendicants in the eſtabliſhment at Munich, when they were relieved from the conſtant torments of rags and vermin.

Some people imagine that early ſufferings, that a number of ſmall inconveniences, habitual ſeverity of reproof, and frequent contradiction and diſappointment, inure children to pain, and conſequently improve their temper. Early ſufferings, which are neceſſary and inevitable, may improve children in fortitude; but the contradictions and diſappointments, which ariſe immediately from the will of others, have not the ſame effect. Children, where their own intereſts are concerned, ſoon diſtinguiſh between theſe two claſſes of evils; they ſubmit patiently when they know that it would be in vain to ſtruggle; they murmur and rebel, if they dare, whenever they feel the hand of power preſs upon them capriciouſly. We ſhould not invent trials of temper for our pupils; if they can bear with good humour the common courſe of events, we ſhould be ſatisfied.

"I tumbled down, and I *bored* it very well," ſaid a little boy of three years old with a look of great ſatisfaction. If this little boy had been thrown down on purpoſe by his parents as a trial of

temper, it probably would not have been borne ſo well. As to inconveniences, in general it is rather a ſign of indolence than a proof of good temper in children, to ſubmit to them quietly; if they can be remedied by exertion, why ſhould they be paſſively endured? If they cannot be remedied, undoubtedly it is then better to abſtract the attention from them as much as poſſible, becauſe this is the only method of leſſening the pain. Children ſhould be aſſiſted in making this diſtinction, by our applauding their exertions when they ſtruggle againſt unneceſſary evil, by our commending their patience whenever they endure inevitable pain without complaints.

Illneſs, for inſtance, is an inevitable evil. To prevent children from becoming peeviſh, when they are ill, we ſhould give our pity and ſympathy with an increaſed appearance of affection, whenever they bear their illneſs with patience. No artifice is neceſſary, we need not affect any increaſe of pity; patience and good humour in the ſufferer naturally excite the affection and eſteem of the ſpectators. The ſelf-complacency, which the young patient muſt feel from a ſenſe of his own fortitude, and the perception that he commands the willing hearts of all who attend him, are really alleviations of his bodily ſufferings; the only alleviations which, in ſome caſes, can poſſibly be afforded.

The attention which is thought neceſſary in learning languages often becomes extremely painful to the pupils, and the temper is often hurt by ineffectual attempts to improve the underſtanding. We haye endeavoured to explain the methods of managing * the

* V. Chapter on Attention.

attention

attention of children with the leaſt poſſible degree of pain. Yeſterday a little boy of three years old, W——, was learning his alphabet from his father; after he had looked at one letter for ſome time with great attention, he raiſed his eyes, and with a look of much good-humour, ſaid to his father, "It makes me tired to "ſtand." His father ſeated him upon his knee, and told him that he did wiſely in telling what tired him: the child, the moment he was ſeated, fixed his attentive eyes again upon his letters with freſh eagerneſs, and ſucceeded. Surely it was not humouring this boy to let him ſit down when he was tired. If we teach a child that our aſſiſtance is to be purchaſed by fretful entreaties; if we ſhew him, that we are afraid of a ſtorm, he will make uſe of our apprehenſions to accompliſh his purpoſes. On the contrary, if he perceives that we can ſteadily reſiſt his tears and ill-humour, and eſpecially if we ſhew indifference upon the occaſion, he will perceive that he had better dry his tears, ſuſpend his rage, and try how far good-humour will prevail. Children, who in every little difficulty are aſſiſted by others, really believe that others are in fault whenever this aſſiſtance is not immediately offered. Look at a humoured child, for inſtance, trying to puſh a chair along the carpet; if a wrinkle in the carpet ſtops his progreſs, he either beats the chair, or inſtantly turns with an angry appealing look to his mother for aſſiſtance; and if ſhe does not get up to help him, he will cry. Another boy, who has not been humoured, will neither beat the chair, nor angrily look round for help; but he will look immediately to ſee what it is that ſtops the chair, and when he ſees the wrinkle in the carpet, he will either level or ſurmount the obſtacle; during this whole operation he will not feel in the leaſt inclined to cry. Both theſe children might have had preciſely the

ſame original ſtock of patience, but by different management the one would become paſſionate and peeviſh, the other both good-humoured and perſevering. The pleaſure of ſucceſs pays children, as well as men, for long toil and labour. Succeſs is the proper reward of perſeverance; but if we ſometimes capriciouſly grant, and ſometimes refuſe, our help, our pupils cannot learn this important truth, and they imagine that ſucceſs depends upon the will of others, and not upon their own efforts. A child educated by a fairy, who ſometimes came with magic aid to perform her taſks, and who was ſometimes deaf to her call, would neceſſarily become ill-humoured.

Several children, who were reading "Evenings at Home," obſerved that in the ſtory of Juliet and the fairy Order, "it was "wrong to make the fairy come whenever Juliet cried, and could "not do her taſk, becauſe that was the way, ſaid the children, to "make the little girl ill-humoured."

We have formerly obſerved that children, who live much with companions of their own age, are under but little habitual reſtraint as to their tempers; they quarrel, fight, and ſhake hands; they have long and loud altercations, in which the ſtrongeſt voice often gets the better. It does not improve the temper to be overborne by petulance and clamour; even mild, ſenſible children, will learn to be poſitive if they converſe with violent dunces. In private families, where children mix in the ſociety of perſons of different ages, who encourage them to converſe without reſerve, they may meet with exact juſtice; they may ſee that their reſpective talents, and good qualities, are appreciated; they may acquire the habit of arguing,

guing, without diſputing, and they may learn that ſpecies of mutual forbearance in trifles, as well as in matters of conſequence, which tends ſo much to domeſtic happineſs. Dr. Franklin, in one of his letters to a young female friend, after anſwering ſome queſtions which ſhe had aſked him, apparently referring to an argument which had paſſed ſome time before, concludes with this comprehenſive compliment: "So, you ſee, I think you had the beſt of the "*argument*; and, as you gave it up in complaiſance to the company, "I think you had alſo the beſt of the *diſpute*." When young people perceive that they gain credit by keeping their temper in converſation, they will not be furious for victory, becauſe moderation, during the time of battle, can alone entitle them to the honours of a triumph.

It is particularly neceſſary for girls to acquire command of temper in arguing, becauſe much of the effect of their powers of reaſoning, and of their wit, when they grow up, will depend upon the gentleneſs and good-humour with which they conduct themſelves. A woman, who ſhould attempt to thunder like Demoſthenes, would not find her eloquence increaſe her domeſtic happineſs. We by no means wiſh that women ſhould yield their better judgment to their fathers or huſbands; but, without uſing any of that debaſing cunning which Rouſſeau recommends, they may ſupport the cauſe of reaſon with all the graces of female gentleneſs.

A man in a furious paſſion is terrible to his enemies, but a woman in a paſſion is diſguſting to her friends; ſhe loſes the reſpect due to her ſex, and ſhe has not maſculine ſtrength and courage to enforce any other ſpecies of reſpect. Theſe circumſtances ſhould be conſidered by writers who adviſe that no difference ſhould be made

in the education of the two ſexes. We cannot help thinking that their happineſs is of more conſequence than their ſpeculative rights, and we wiſh to educate women ſo that they may be happy in the ſituations in which they are moſt likely to be placed. So much depends upon the temper of women, that it ought to be moſt carefully cultivated in early life; girls ſhould be more inured to reſtraint than boys, becauſe they are likely to meet with more reſtraint in ſociety. Girls ſhould learn the habit of bearing ſlight reproofs, without thinking them matters of great conſequence; but then they ſhould always be permitted to ſtate their arguments, and they ſhould perceive that juſtice is ſhewn them, and that they increaſe the affection and eſteem of their friends by command of temper. Many paſſionate men are extremely good-natured, and make amends for their extravagancies by their candour, and their eagerneſs to pleaſe thoſe whom they have injured during their fits of anger. It is ſaid that the ſervants of Dean Swift uſed to throw themſelves in his way whenever he was in a paſſion, becauſe they knew that his generoſity would recompenſe them for ſtanding the full fire of his anger. A woman, who permitted herſelf to treat her ſervants with ill-humour, and who believed that ſhe could pay them for ill uſage, would make a very bad miſtreſs of a family; her huſband and her children would ſuffer from her ill temper, without being recompenſed for their miſery. We ſhould not let girls imagine that they can balance ill-humour by ſome good quality or accompliſhment, becauſe, in fact, there are none which can ſupply the want of temper in the female ſex.

A juſt idea of the nature of dignity, oppoſed to what is commonly called *ſpirit*, ſhould be given early to our female pupils. Many women, who are not diſpoſed to violence of temper, affect a certain

certain degree of petulance, and a certain ſtubbornneſs of opinion, merely becauſe they imagine that to be gentle, is to be mean, and that to liſten to reaſon, is to be deficient in ſpirit.

Enlarging the underſtanding of young women will prevent them from feeling thoſe trifling vexations which irritate thoſe who have none but trifling objects. We have obſerved that concerted trials of temper are not advantageous for very young children; thoſe trials, which are ſometimes prepared for pupils at a more advanced period of education, are not always more happy in their conſequences. We make trifles appear important, and then we are ſurpriſed that they are thought ſo.

Lord Kames tells us that he was acquainted with a gentleman who, though otherwiſe a man of good underſtanding, did not ſhew his good ſenſe in the education of his daughters temper. "He "had," ſays Lord Kames, "three comely daughters, between "twelve and ſixteen, and to inure them to bear diſappointments, "he would propoſe to make a viſit, which he knew would de-"light them. The coach was beſpoke, and the young ladies, com-"pletely armed for conqueſt, were ready to take their ſeats. But, "behold! their father had changed his mind. This, indeed, was "a diſappointment; but as it appeared to proceed from whim, or "caprice, it might ſour their temper, inſtead of improving it *."

But why ſhould a viſit be made a matter of ſuch mighty conſequence to girls? Why ſhould it be a diſappointment to ſtay at home? and why ſhould Lord Kames adviſe, that diſappointments

* Lord Kames, p. 109.

ſhould *be made to appear* the effects of chance? This method, of making things appear to be what they are not, we cannot too often reprobate; it will not have better ſucceſs in the education of the temper, than in the management of the underſtanding; it will ruin one or the other, or both: even when promiſes are made with perfect good faith to young people, the ſtate of ſuſpenſe which they create is not ſerviceable to the temper, and it is extremely difficult to promiſe proper rewards *. The celebrated Serena ſurely eſtabliſhed her reputation for good temper without any very ſevere trials. Our ſtandard of female excellence is evidently changed ſince the days of Griſelda; but we are inclined to think that, even in theſe degenerate days, public amuſements would not fill the female imagination, if they were not early repreſented as ſuch charming things, ſuch great rewards, to girls, by their imprudent friends.

The temper depends much upon the underſtanding, and whenever we give our pupils, whether male or female, falſe ideas of pleaſure, we prepare for them innumerable cauſes of diſcontent. "You ought to be above ſuch things! You ought not to let your-" ſelf be vexed by ſuch trifles!" are common expreſſions, which do not immediately change the irritated perſon's feelings. You muſt alter the habits of thinking, you muſt change the view of the object, before you can alter the feelings. Suppoſe a girl has from the converſation of all her acquaintance learned to imagine, that there is ſome vaſt pleaſure in going to a maſquerade: it is in vain to tell her, in the moment that ſhe is diſappointed about her maſquerade dreſs, that "it is a trifle, and ſhe ought to be above

"trifles."

"trifles." She cannot be above them at a moment's warning; but if ſhe had never been inſpired with a violent deſire to go to a maſquerade, the diſappointment would really appear trifling. We may calculate the probability of any perſon's mortification by obſerving the vehemence of their hopes; thus we are led to obſerve, that the imagination influences the temper. Upon this ſubject we ſhall ſpeak more fully when we treat of Imagination and Judgment.

To meaſure the degrees of indulgence which may be ſafe for any given pupils, we muſt attend to the effect produced by pleaſure upon their imagination and temper. If a ſmall diminution of their uſual enjoyments diſturbs them, they have been rendered not too happy, but too ſuſceptible. Happy people, who have reſources in their own power, do not feel every ſlight variation in external circumſtances. We may ſafely allow children to be as happy as they poſſibly can be without ſacrificing the future to the preſent. Such proſperity will not enervate their minds.

We make this aſſertion with ſome confidence, becauſe experience has in many inſtances confirmed our opinion. Amongſt a large family of children, who have never been tormented with artificial trials of temper, and who have been made as happy as it was in the power of their parents to make them, there is not one ill-tempered child. We have examples every day before us of different ages from three years old to fifteen.

Before parents adopt either Epicurean or Stoical doctrines in the education of the temper, it may be prudent to calculate the probabilities of the good and evil, which their pupils are likely to meet

with in life. The Sybarite, whoſe night's reſt was diſturbed by a doubled roſe leaf, deſerves to be pitied almoſt as much as the young man who, when he was benighted in the ſnow, was reproached by his ſevere father for having collected a heap of ſnow to make himſelf a pillow. Unleſs we could for ever enſure the bed of roſes to our pupils, we ſhould do very imprudently to make it early neceſſary to their repoſe; unleſs the pillow of ſnow is likely to be their lot, we need not inure them to it from their infancy.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VII.

ON OBEDIENCE.

OBEDIENCE has been often called the virtue of childhood. How far it is entitled to the name of virtue we need not at preſent ſtop to examine; obedience is expected from children long before they can reaſon upon the juſtice of our commands; conſequently it muſt be taught as a habit. By aſſociating pleaſure with thoſe things which we firſt deſire children to do, we ſhould make them neceſſarily like to obey; on the contrary, if we begin by ordering them to do what is difficult and diſagreeable to them, they muſt diſlike obedience. The poet ſeems to underſtand this ſubject when he ſays,

> " Or bid her wear your necklace rowed with pearl,
> " You'll find your Fanny an obedient girl *."

The taſte for a necklace rowed with pearl is not the *firſt* taſte even in girls that we ſhould wiſh to cultivate; but the poet's *principle* is good, notwithſtanding. Bid your child do things that are agreeable to him, and you may be ſure of his obedience. Bid a hungry boy eat apple pye. Order a ſhivering urchin to warm

* Elegy on an old Beauty. PARNELL.

himſelf

himſelf at a good fire; deſire him to go to bed when you ſee him yawn with fatigue, and by ſuch ſeaſonable commands you will ſoon form aſſociations of pleaſure in his mind, with the voice and tone of authority. This tone ſhould never be threatening, or alarming; it ſhould be gentle, but decided. Whenever it becomes neceſſary that a child ſhould do what he feels diſagreeable, it is better to make him ſubmit at once to neceſſity, than to create any doubt and ſtruggle in his mind by leaving him a poſſibility of reſiſtance. Suppoſe a little boy wiſhes to ſit up later than the hour at which you think proper that he ſhould go to bed, it is moſt prudent to take him to bed at the appointed time without ſaying one word to him, either in the way of entreaty or command. If you entreat, you give the child an idea that he has it in his power to refuſe you: if you command, and he does not inſtantly obey, you hazard your authority, and you teach him that he can ſucceſsfully ſet his will in oppoſition to yours. The boy wiſhes to ſit up; he ſees no reaſon, in the moral fitneſs of things, why he ſhould go to bed at one hour more than at another, all he perceives is, that ſuch is your will. What does he gain by obeying you? Nothing; he loſes the pleaſure of ſitting up half an hour longer. How can you then expect, that he ſhould in conſequence of theſe reaſonings give up his obvious immediate intereſt, and march off to bed heroically at the word of command? Let him not be put to the trial; when he has for ſome time been regularly taken to bed at a fixed hour, he will acquire the habit of thinking that he muſt go at that hour: aſſociation will make him expect it, and if his experience has been uniform, he will, without knowing why, think it neceſſary that he ſhould do as he has been uſed to do. When the habit of obedience to cuſtomary neceſſity is thus formed, we may without much riſk engraft upon it obedience to the voice of authority.

authority. For inſtance, when the boy hears the clock ſtrike, the uſual ſignal for his departure, you may, if you ſee that he is habitually ready to obey this ſignal, aſſociate your commands with that to which he has already learned to pay attention. "Go; it "is time that you ſhould go to bed now," will only ſeem to the child a confirmation of the ſentence already pronounced by the clock; by degrees, your commands, after they have been regularly repeated, when the child feels no hope of evading them, will, even in new circumſtances, have from aſſociation the power of compelling obedience.

Whenever we deſire a child to do any thing, we ſhould be perfectly certain, not only that it is a thing which he is capable of doing; but alſo, that it is ſomething we can, in caſe it comes to that ultimate argument, force him to do. You cannot oblige a child to ſtand up, if he has a mind to ſit down; or to walk, if he does not chooſe to exert his muſcles for that purpoſe: but you can abſolutely prevent him from touching whatever you deſire him not to meddle with, by your ſuperior ſtrength. It is beſt then to begin with prohibitions, with ſuch prohibitions as you can, and will ſteadily perſevere to enforce: if you are not exact in requiring obedience, you will never obtain it either by perſuaſion or authority. As it will require a conſiderable portion of time and unremitting attention, to enforce the punctual obſervance of a variety of prohibitions, it will, for your own ſake, be moſt prudent to iſſue as few edicts as poſſible, and to be ſparing in the uſe of the imperative mood. It will, if you calculate the trouble you muſt take day after day to watch your pupil, coſt you leſs to begin by arranging every circumſtance in your power, ſo as to prevent the neceſſity of truſting to laws what ought to be guarded againſt by precaution.

Do you, for inſtance, wiſh to prevent your ſon from breaking a beautiful china jar in your drawing room; inſtead of forbidding him to touch it, put it out of his reach. Would you prevent your ſon from talking to ſervants, let your houſe, in the firſt place, be ſo arranged, that he ſhall never be obliged to paſs through any rooms where he is likely to meet with ſervants; let all his wants be gratified without their interference; let him be able to get at his hat without aſking the footman to reach it for him, from its inacceſſible height *. The ſimple expedient of hanging the hat in a place where the boy can reach it, will ſave you the trouble of continually repeating, "Don't aſk William, child, to reach your hat; can't you come and aſk me?" Yes, the boy can come and aſk you; but if you are buſy, you will not like to go in queſt of the hat; your reluctance will poſſibly appear in your countenance, and the child, who underſtands the language of looks better than that of words, will clearly comprehend that you are diſpleaſed with him at the very inſtant that he is fulfilling the letter of the law.

A lady, who was fond of having her houſe well arranged, diſcovered, to the amazement of her acquaintance, the art of making all her ſervants keep every thing in its place. Even in the kitchen, from the moſt minute article to the moſt unwieldy, every thing was invariably to be found in its allotted ſtation; the ſervants were thought miracles of obedience; but, in fact, they obeyed becauſe it was the eaſieſt thing they could poſſibly do. Order was made more convenient to them than diſorder, and, with their utmoſt ingenuity to ſave themſelves trouble, they could not invent places for every thing more appropriate than thoſe which had been aſſigned by

* Rouſſeau.

their

their miſtreſs's legiſlative œconomy. In the ſame manner we may ſecure the *orderly* obedience of children without exhauſting their patience or our own. Rouſſeau adviſes, that children ſhould be governed ſolely by the neceſſity of circumſtances; but there are *one and twenty* excellent objections to this ſyſtem, the firſt being that it is impoſſible: of this Rouſſeau muſt have been ſenſible in the trials which he made as a preceptor. When he had the management of a refractory child, he found himſelf obliged to invent and arrange a whole drama, by artificial experience to convince his little pupil, that he had better not walk out in the ſtreets of Paris alone; and that, therefore, he ſhould wait till his tutor could conveniently accompany him. Rouſſeau had prepared the neighbours on each ſide of the ſtreet to make proper ſpeeches as his pupil paſſed by their doors, which alarmed and piqued the boy effectually. At length the child was met, at a proper time, by a friend who had been appointed to watch him; and thus he was brought home ſubmiſſive. This ſcene, as Rouſſeau obſerves, was admirably well performed*; but what occaſion could there be for ſo much contrivance and deceit? If his pupil had not been uncommonly deficient in penetration, he would ſoon have diſcovered his preceptor in ſome of his artifices; then adieu both to obedience and confidence. A falſe idea of the pleaſures of liberty miſled Rouſſeau. Children have not our abſtract ideas of the pleaſures of liberty, they do not, until they have ſuffered from ill judged reſtraints, feel any ſtrong deſire to exerciſe what we call free will; liberty is, with them, the liberty of doing certain ſpecific things which they have found to be agreeable; liberty is not the general idea of pleaſure, in doing whatever they WILL *to do*. Rouſſeau

* Emilius, vol. i. page 23.

deſires, that *we ſhould not let our pupil know that in doing our will he is obedient to us.* But why? Why ſhould we not let a child know the truth? If we attempt to conceal it, we ſhall only get into endleſs abſurdities and difficulties. Lord Kames tells us, that he was acquainted with a couple, who in the education of their family purſued as much as poſſible Rouſſeau's plan. One evening, as the father was playing at cheſs with a friend, one of his children, a boy of about four years old, took a piece from the board, and ran away to play with it. The father, whoſe principles would not permit him to aſſert his right to his own cheſſman, began to bargain for his property with his ſon. "Harry," ſaid he, "let "us have back the man, and there's an apple for you." The apple was ſoon devoured, and the child returned to the cheſs board, and kidnapped another cheſſman. What this man's ranſom might be we are not yet informed; but Lord Kames tells us, that the father was obliged to ſuſpend his game at cheſs till his ſon was led away to his ſupper. Does it ſeem juſt, that parents ſhould become ſlaves to the liberties of their children? If one ſet of beings or another ſhould ſacrifice a portion of happineſs, ſurely, thoſe who are the moſt uſeful, and the moſt capable of increaſing the knowledge and the pleaſures of life, have ſome claim to a preference; and when the power is entirely in their own hands, it is moſt probable that they will defend their own intereſts. We ſhall not, like many who have ſpoken of Rouſſeau, ſteal from him after having abuſed him; his remarks upon the abſurd and tyrannical reſtraints which are continually impoſed upon children by the folly of nurſes and ſervants, or by the imprudent anxiety of parents and preceptors, are excellent; whenever Rouſſeau is in the right, his eloquence is irreſiſtible.

To determine what degree of obedience it is juſt to require from children, we muſt always conſider what degree of reaſon they poſſeſs: whenever we can uſe reaſon, we ſhould never uſe force; it is only whilſt children are too young to comprehend reaſon *, that we ſhould expect from them implicit ſubmiſſion. The means which have been pointed out for teaching the *habit* of obedience, muſt not be depended upon for teaching any thing more than the mere habit. When children begin to reaſon, they do not act merely from habit; they will not be obedient at this age, unleſs their underſtanding is convinced that it is for their advantage to be ſo. Wherever we can explain the reaſons for any of our requeſts, we ſhould now attempt it; but whenever theſe cannot be fully explained, it is better not to give a partial explanation; it will be beſt to ſay ſteadily, "You cannot underſtand this now, you will "perhaps underſtand it ſome time hence." Whenever we tell children, that we forbid them to do ſuch and things for any particular reaſon, we muſt take care that the reaſon aſſigned is adequate, and that it will in all caſes hold good. For inſtance, if we forbid a boy to eat unripe fruit *becauſe it will make him ill*, and if afterwards the boy eat ſome unripe gooſeberries without feeling ill in conſequence of his diſobedience, he will doubt the truth of the perſon who prohibited unripe fruit; he will rather truſt his own partial experience than any aſſertions. The idea of *hurting his health* is a general idea, which he does not yet comprehend. It is more prudent to keep him out of the way of unripe gooſeberries, than to hazard at once his obedience and his integrity. We need not expatiate farther; the inſtance we have given may be readily applied to all caſes in which children have it in their power to

* Vol. i. page 59.

disobey with *immediate* impunity, and, what is still more dangerous, with the certainty of obtaining immediate pleasure. The gratification of their senses, and the desire of bodily exercise, ought never to be unnecessarily restrained. Our pupils should distinctly perceive, that we wish to make them happy, and every instance, in which they discover that obedience has really made them happier, will be more in our favour, than all the lectures we could preach. From the past they will judge of the future; children, who have for many years experienced, that their parents have exacted obedience only to such commands as proved to be ultimately wise and beneficial, will surely be disposed from habit, from gratitude, and yet more from prudence, to consult their parents in all the material actions of their lives.

We may observe, that the spirit of contradiction, which sometimes breaks out in young people the moment they are able to act for themselves, arises frequently from slight causes in their early education. Children, who have experienced, that submission to the will of others has constantly made them unhappy, will necessarily, by reasoning inversely, imagine, that felicity consists in following their own free will.

The French poet Boileau was made very unhappy by neglect and restraint during his education; when he grew up, he never would agree with those who talked to him of the pleasures of childhood *. " Peut on," disoit ce poëte amoureux de l'indépendance, " ne pas regarder comme un grand malheur le chagrin

* Histoire des Membres de l'Académie, par M. d'Alembert. Tome troisieme, p. 24.

" continuel

" continuel et particulier à cet age de ne jamais faire ſa vo-
" lonté?" It was in vain, continues his biographer, to boaſt to him of the advantages of this happy conſtraint, which ſaves youth from ſo many follies. " What ſignifies our knowing the value
" of our chains when we have ſhaken them off, if we feel nothing
" but their weight whilſt we wear them?" the galled poet uſed to reply. Nor did Boileau enjoy his freedom, though he thought with ſuch horror of his ſlavery. He declared, that if he had it in his choice, either to be born again upon the hard conditions of again going through his childhood, or not to exiſt, he would rather not exiſt: but he was not happy during any period of his exiſtence; he quarrelled with all the ſeaſons of life; " all ſeemed to him equal-
" ly diſagreeable; youth, manhood, and old age, are each ſubject,
" he obſerved, to impetuous paſſions, to care, and to infirmities."
Hence we may conclude, that the ſeverity of his education had not ſucceeded in teaching him to ſubmit philoſophically to neceſ-ſity, or yet in giving him much enjoyment from that *liberty* which he ſo much coveted. Thus it too often happens, that an imaginary value is ſet upon the exerciſe of the free will by thoſe, who during their childhood have ſuffered under injudicious reſtrictions. Sometimes the love of free will is ſo uncontrollably excited, even during childhood, that it breaks out, unfortunately, both for the pupils and the preceptors, in the formidable ſhape of obſtinacy.

Of all the faults to which children are ſubject, there is none which is more difficult to cure, or more eaſy to prevent, than obſtinacy. As it is early obſerved by thoſe who are engaged in education, it is ſometimes ſuppoſed to be inherent in the temper; but, ſo far from being naturally obſtinate, infants ſhow thoſe ſtrong propenſities

propenſities to ſympathy and imitation, which prepare them for an oppoſite character. The folly of the nurſe, however, makes an intemperate uſe of theſe happy propenſities. She perpetually torments the child to exert himſelf for her amuſement, all his ſenſes and all his muſcles ſhe commands. He muſt ſee, hear, talk, or be ſilent, move or be ſtill, when ſhe thinks proper; and often with the deſire of amuſing her charge, or of ſhewing him off to the company, ſhe diſguſts him with voluntary exertion. Before young children have completely acquired the uſe of their limbs, they cannot perform feats of activity or of dexterity at a moment's warning. Their muſcles do not inſtantaneouſly obey their will; the efforts they make are painful to themſelves; the awkwardneſs of their attempts is painful to others; the delay of the body is often miſtaken for the reluctance of the mind, and the impatient tutor pronounces the child to be obſtinate, whilſt all the time he may be doing his utmoſt to obey. Inſtead of growing angry with the helpleſs child, it would be ſurely more wiſe to aſſiſt his feeble and inexperienced efforts. If we preſs him to make unſucceſsful attempts, we ſhall aſſociate pain both with voluntary exertion and with obedience.

Little W——— (a boy of three years old) was one day aſked by his father to jump. The boy ſtood ſtock ſtill. Perhaps he did not know the meaning of the word jump. The father, inſtead of preſſing him farther, aſked ſeveral other children who happened to be in the room to jump, and he jumped along with them; all this was done playfully. The little boy looked on ſilently for a ſhort time, and ſeemed much pleaſed. "Papa jumps!" he exclaimed. His brother L—— lifted him up two or three times; and he then tried to jump, and ſucceeded: from ſympathy he learned

the command of the muſcles which were neceſſary to his jumping, and to his obedience. If this boy had been importuned, or forced to exert himſelf, he might have been thus taught obſtinacy, merely from the imprudent impatience of the ſpectators. The reluctance to ſtop when a child is once in motion, is often miſtaken for obſtinacy: when he is running, ſinging, laughing, or talking, if you ſuddenly command him to ſtop, he cannot inſtantly obey you. If we reflect upon our own minds, we may perceive, that we cannot without conſiderable effort turn our thoughts ſuddenly from any ſubject on which we have been long intent. If we have been long in a carriage, the noiſe of the wheels ſounds in our ear, and we ſeem to be yet going on after the carriage has ſtopped. We do not pretend to found any accurate reaſoning upon analogy, but we may obſerve, that in the difficulty in which our minds are ſtopped or put in motion, there is ſomething analogous to the *vis inſita* of body.

W—— (three years old) had for ſome minutes vociferated two or three words of a ſong, till the noiſe could be no longer patiently endured; his father called to him, and deſired that he would not make ſo much noiſe. W—— pauſed for a moment, but then went on ſinging the ſame words. His brother ſaid, Huſh! W—— pauſed for another ſecond or two; but then went on with his roundelay: in his countenance there was not the ſlighteſt appearance of ill-humour. One of his ſiſters put him upon a board which was lying on the floor, and which was a little unſteady; as he walked cautiouſly along this board, his attention was occupied, and he forgot his ſong.

This inability ſuddenly to deſiſt from any occupation may eaſily grow

grow into obſtinacy, becauſe the pain of checking themſelves will be great in children, and this pain will be aſſociated with the commands of thoſe who govern them; it is better to ſtop them by preſenting new objects to their attention, than by the ſtimulus of a peremptory voice. Children ſhould never be accuſed of obſtinacy; the accuſation cannot cure, but may ſuperinduce the diſeaſe. If, unfortunately, they have been ſuffered to contract a diſpoſition to this fault, it may be cured by a little patience and good temper. We have mentioned how example and ſympathy may be advantageouſly uſed; praiſe and looks of affection, which naturally expreſs our feeling when children do right, encourage the ſlighteſt efforts to obey; but we muſt carefully avoid ſhowing any triumph in our victory over yielding ſtubbornneſs.

"Aye, I knew that you would do what we deſired at laſt, "you might as well have done it at firſt," is a common nurſery-maid's ſpeech, which is well calculated to pique the pride of a half ſubdued penitent. When children are made aſhamed of ſubmiſſion, they will become intrepid, probably unconquerable, rebels.

Neither rewards nor puniſhments will then avail; the pupil perceives, that both the wit and the ſtrength of his maſter are ſet in competition with his; at the expence of a certain degree of pain he has the power to reſiſt as long as he thinks proper, and there is ſcarcely any degree of pain that a tutor dares to inflict, which an obſtinate hero is not able to endure; with the ſpirit of a martyr he ſuſtains reproaches and torture. If, at length, the maſter changes his tone, and tries to ſoften and win the child to his purpoſe, his rewards are conſidered as bribes: if the boy really thinks

that

that he is in the right to rebel, he muſt yield his ſenſe of honour to the force of temptation when he obeys. If he has formed no ſuch idea of honour, he perhaps conſiders the reward as the price of his ſubmiſſion; and upon a future occaſion he will know how to raiſe that price by prolonging his ſhew of reſiſtance. Where the child has formed a falſe idea of honour, his obſtinacy is only miſtaken reſolution; we ſhould addreſs ourſelves to his underſtanding, and endeavour to convince him of his error. Where the underſtanding is convinced, and the *habit* of oppoſition ſtill continues, we ſhould carefully avoid calling his falſe aſſociations into action; we ſhould not aſk him to do any thing for which he has acquired an habitual averſion; we ſhould alter our manner of ſpeaking to him, that neither the tones of our voice, the words, or the looks, which have been his cuſtomary ſignals for reſiſtance, may recal the ſame feelings to his mind; placed in new circumſtances, he may acquire new habits, and his old aſſociations will in time be forgotten. Sufficient time muſt however be allowed; we may judge when it is prudent to try him on any old dangerous ſubjects by many ſymptoms: by obſerving the degree of alacrity with which he obeys on indifferent occaſions; by obſerving what degree of command he has acquired over himſelf in general; by obſerving in what manner he judges of the conduct and temper of other children in ſimilar circumſtances; by obſerving whether the conſciouſneſs of his former ſelf continues in full force. Children often completely forget what they have been.

Where obſtinacy ariſes from principle, if we may uſe the expreſſion, it cannot be cured by the ſame means which are taken to cure that ſpecies of the diſeaſe which depends merely upon habit.

The ſame courage and fortitude which in one caſe we reprobate, and try to conquer with all our might, in the other we admire and extol. This ſhould be pointed out to children, and if they act from a love of glory, as ſoon as they perceive, they will follow that courſe which will ſecure to them the prize.

Charles XII, whom the Turks, when incenſed by his diſobedience to the grand ſeignior, called Demir-baſh, or *head of iron*, ſhewed early ſymptoms of this headſtrong nature; yet in his childhood, if his preceptor* named but glory, any thing could be obtained from Charles. Charles had a great averſion to learning Latin, but when he was told that the kings of Poland and Denmark underſtood it, he began to ſtudy it in good earneſt. We do not mean to infer, that emulation with the kings of Poland and Denmark was the beſt poſſible motive which Charles the Twelfth's preceptor could have uſed, to make the young prince conquer his averſion to Latin; but we would point out, that where the love of glory is connected with obſtinate temper, the paſſion is more than a match for the temper. Let us but enlighten this love of glory, and we produce magnanimity in the place of obſtinacy. Examples in converſation and in books of great characters, who have not been aſhamed to change their opinions, and to acknowledge that they have been miſtaken, will probably make a great impreſſion upon young people; they will from theſe learn to admire candour, and will be taught that it is *mean* to perſiſt in the wrong. Examples from books muſt however be alſo uniformly ſupported by examples in real life; preceptors and parents muſt practiſe the vir-

* Voltaire's Hiſt. Charles XII, p. 13.

tues

tues which they preach. It is ſaid, that the amiable Fenelon acquired the moſt permanent influence over his pupil by the candour with which he always treated him. Fenelon did not think that he could leſſen his dignity by confeſſing himſelf in the wrong.

Young people who have quick abilities, and who happen to live with thoſe who are inferior to them either in knowledge or in capacity, are apt to become poſitive and ſelf willed; they meaſure all the world by the individuals with whom they have meaſured themſelves; and, as they have been convinced that they have been in the right in many caſes, they take it for granted that their judgment muſt be always infallible. This diſeaſe may be eaſily cured; it is only neceſſary to place the patient amongſt his ſuperiors in intellect, his own experience will work his cure: he liked to follow his will, becauſe his judgment had taught him that he might truſt more ſecurely to the *tact* of his own underſtanding, than to the deciſion of others; as ſoon as he diſcovers more ſenſe in the arguments of his companions he will liſten to them, and if he finds their reaſon ſuperior to his own, he will ſubmit. A preceptor, who wiſhes to gain aſcendancy over a clever poſitive boy, muſt reaſon with all poſſible preciſion, and muſt always ſhew that he is willing to be decided by the ſtrongeſt arguments which can be produced. If he ever propheſies, he ſets his judgment at ſtake; therefore he ſhould not propheſy about matters of chance, but rather in affairs where he can calculate with certainty. If his prophecies are frequently accompliſhed, his pupil's confidence in him will rapidly increaſe; and if he deſires that confidence to be permanent, he will not affect myſtery, but he will honeſtly explain the circumſtances by which he formed his opinions. Young people who are accuſtomed to hear and to give reaſons for their opinions, will not

be violent and poſitive in aſſertions; they will not think that the truth of any aſſertion can be manifeſted by repeating over the ſame words a thouſand times; they will not aſk how many people are of this or that opinion, but rather what arguments are produced on each ſide. There is very little danger, that any people, whether young or old, ſhould continue to be poſitive, who are in the habit of exerciſing their reaſoning faculty.

It has been often obſerved that extremely good humoured complaiſant children, when they grow up, become ill tempered; and young men who are generally liked in ſociety as pleaſant companions, become ſurly tyrannical maſters in their own families, poſitive about mere trifles, and anxious to ſubjugate the *wills* of all who are anywiſe dependent upon them. This character has been nicely touched by De Boiſſy in his comedy called "Dehors trom-"peurs."

We muſt obſerve, that whilſt young people are in company, and under the immediate influence of the excitements of novelty, numbers, and diſſipation, it is ſcarcely poſſible to form a juſt eſtimate of the goodneſs of their temper. Young men who are the moſt ready to yield their inclinations to the humour of their companions, are not therefore to be conſidered as of really compliant diſpoſitions; the idle or indolent, who have no reſources in their own minds, and no independent occupations, are victims to the yawning demon of Ennui the moment they are left in ſolitude. They conſequently dread ſo heartily to be left alone, that they readily give up a portion of their liberty to purchaſe the pleaſures and mental ſupport which ſociety affords. When they give up their wiſhes, and follow the lead of the company, they in fact give

give up but very little; their object is amuſement, and this obtained, their time is ſacrificed without regret. On the contrary, thoſe who are engaged in literary or profeſſional purſuits ſet a great value upon their time, and feel conſiderable reluctance to part with it without ſome adequate compenſation; they muſt conſequently be leſs complaiſant companions, and by the generality of ſuperficial obſervers would be thought perhaps leſs complying in their tempers than the idle and diſſipated. But when the idle man has paſt the common ſeaſon for diſſipation, and is ſettled in domeſtic life, his ſpirits flag from the want of his uſual excitements; and, as he has no amuſements in his own family to purchaſe by the polite ſacrifice of his opinion or his will, he is not inclined to complaiſance; the pleaſures of exerciſing his free will becomes important in his eyes, he has few pleaſures, and of thoſe few he is tenacious. He has been accuſtomed to ſubmit to others in ſociety, he is proud to be maſter at home; he has few emotions, and the emotion cauſed by the exertion of command becomes agreeable and neceſſary to him. Thus many of the ſame cauſes which make a young man a pleaſant companion abroad, tend naturally to make him a tyrant at home. This perverſity and poſitiveneſs of temper ultimately ariſe from the want of occupation, and from deficient energy of mind. We may guard againſt theſe evils by education; when we ſee a playful active child, we have little fear of his temper. "Oh, he will certainly be good tempered, he is the moſt "obedient complying creature in the world, he'll do any thing "you aſk him." But let us cultivate his underſtanding, and give him taſtes which ſhall occupy and intereſt him agreeably through life, or elſe this ſweet complying temper will not laſt till he is thirty.

An

An ill cured obſtinacy of temper, when it breaks out after young people are arrived at years of diſcretion, is terrible. Thoſe who attempt to conquer obſtinacy in children by bodily pain, or by ſevere puniſhments of any kind, often appear to ſucceed, and to have entirely eradicated, when they have merely ſuppreſſed the diſeaſe for a time. As ſoon as the child that is intimidated by force or fear is relieved from reſtraint, he will reſume his former habits: he may change the mode of ſhewing it, but the diſpoſition will continue the ſame. It will appear in various parts of the conduct, as the limbs of the giant appeared unexpectedly at different periods, and in different parts of the Caſtle of Otranto.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER VIII.

ON TRUTH.

It is not neceſſary here to pronounce a panegyric upon truth; its uſe and value is thoroughly underſtood by all the world; but we ſhall endeavour to give ſome practical advice, which may be of ſervice in educating children, not only to the love, but to the habits, of integrity. Theſe are not always found, as they ought to be, inſeparable.

Rouſſeau's eloquence, and Locke's reaſoning, have ſufficiently reprobated, and it is to be hoped have exploded, the ſyſtem of lecturing children upon morality; of giving them precepts and general maxims which they do not underſtand, and which they cannot apply. We ſhall not produce long quotations from books which are in every body's hands *. There is one particular in which Rouſſeau eſpecially, and moſt other authors who have written upon education, have given very dangerous counſel; they have counſelled parents to teach truth by falſehood. The privilege of

* We refer to Locke's Thoughts concerning Education, and Rouſſeau's Emilius, vol. i.

uſing contrivance, and ingenious deceptions, has been uniformly reſerved for preceptors; and the pupils, by moral deluſions, and the theatric effect of circumſtances treacherouſly arranged, are to be duped, ſurpriſed, and cheated, into virtue. The dialogue between the gardener and Emilius about the Malteſe melon ſeed is an inſtance of this method of inſtruction. Honeſt Robert, the gardener, in concert with the tutor, tells poor Emilius a ſeries of lies, prepares a garden, "choice Malteſe melon-ſeed," and "worthleſs beans," all to cheat the boy into juſt notions of the rights of property, and the nature of exchange and barter.

Part of the *artificial courſe of experience* in that excellent work on education, Adéle and Théodore, is defective upon the ſame principle. There ſhould be no moral deluſions; no *artificial* courſe of experience; no plots laid by parents to make out the truth; no *liſtening* fathers, mothers, or governeſſes; no pretended confidence, or perfidious friends; in one word, no falſehood ſhould be practiſed. That magic which cheats the ſenſes, at the ſame time confounds the underſtanding. The ſpells of Proſpero, the ſtrangeneſſes of the Iſle, perplex and confound the ſenſes and underſtanding of all who are ſubjected to his magic, till at length, worked by force of wonders into credulity, his captives declare that they will believe any thing; "that there are men dewlapt like bulls;" and "what elſe does want credit," ſays the Duke Anthonio, "come "to me, and I'll be ſworn 'tis true."

Children, whoſe ſimplicity has been practiſed upon by the fabling morality of their preceptors, begin by feeling ſomething like the implicit credulity of Anthonio; but the arts of the preceptors are quickly ſuſpected by their ſubjects, and the charm is for ever reverſed.

When

When once a child detects you in falsehood, you lose his confidence; his incredulity will then be as extravagant as his former belief was gratuitous. It is in vain to expect, by the most eloquent manifestoes, or by the most secret leagues offensive and defensive, to conceal your real views, sentiments, and actions, from children. Their interest keeps their attention continually awake; not a word, not a look, in which they are concerned, escapes them; they see, hear, and combine, with sagacious rapidity; if falsehood be in the wind, detection hunts her to discovery.

Honesty is the best policy, must be the maxim in education, as well as in all the other affairs of life. We must not only be exact in speaking truth to our pupils, but to every body else; to acquaintance, to servants, to friends, to enemies. It is not here meant to enter any overstrained protest against the common phrases and forms of politeness; the current coin may not be pure, but when once its alloy has been ascertained, and its value appreciated, there is no fraud, though there may be some folly, in continuing to trade upon equal terms with our neighbours, with money of high nominal, and scarcely any real, value. No fraud is committed by a gentleman's saying that he is *not at home*, because no deception is intended; the words are silly, but they mean, and are understood to mean, nothing more than that the person in question does not choose to see the visitors who knock at his door. "I am, Sir, "your obedient and humble servant," at the end of a letter, does not mean that the person who signs the letter is a servant, or humble, or obedient, but it simply expresses that he knows how to conclude his letter according to the usual form of civility. Change this absurd phrase, and welcome; but do not let us, in the spirit of Draco, make no distinction between errors and crimes. The

foibles of faſhion or folly are not to be treated with the deteſtation due to hypocriſy and falſehood; if ſmall faults are to incur ſuch grievous puniſhments, there can, indeed, be none found ſufficiently ſevere for great crimes; great crimes, conſequently, for want of adequate puniſhment, will increaſe, and the little faults, that have met with diſproportionate perſecution, will become amiable and innocent in the eyes of commiſerating human nature. It is not difficult to explain to young people the real meaning, or rather the nonſenſe, of a few complimentary phraſes; their integrity will not be increaſed or diminiſhed by either ſaying, or omitting to ſay, "I am much obliged to you," or "I ſhall be very happy to "ſee you at dinner," &c. We do not mean to include in the harmleſs liſt of compliments any expreſſions which are meant to deceive; the common cuſtom of the country, and of the ſociety in which we live, ſufficiently regulates the ſtyle of complimentary language, and there are few ſo ignorant of the world as ſeriouſly to miſunderſtand this, or to miſtake civility for friendſhip.

There is a ſtory told of a Chineſe mandarin, who paid a viſit to a friend at Paris, at the time when Paris was the ſeat of politeneſs. His well-bred hoſt, on the firſt evening of his arrival, gave him a handſome ſupper, lodged him in the beſt bedchamber, and when he wiſhed him a good night, amongſt other civil things, ſaid he hoped the mandarin would, during his ſtay at Paris, conſider that houſe as his own. Early the next morning the polite Pariſian was wakened by the ſound of loud hammering in the mandarin's bedchamber; on entering the room, he found the mandarin and ſome maſons hard at work throwing down the walls of the houſe. "You raſcals, are you mad?" exclaimed the Frenchman to the maſons. "Not at all, my dear friend," ſaid the Chineſe

neſe man, ſoberly, "I ſet the poor fellows to work, this room is "too ſmall for my taſte; you ſee I have loſt no time in availing "myſelf of your goodneſs. Did not you deſire me to uſe this "houſe as if it were my own, during my ſtay at Paris?" "Aſ-"ſuredly, my dear friend, and ſo I hope you will," replied the French gentleman, "the only misfortune here is, that *I* did not "underſtand Chineſe, and that *I* had no interpreter." They found an interpreter, or a Chineſe dictionary, and when the Pariſian phraſe was properly tranſlated, the mandarin, who was an honeſt man, begged his polite hoſt's pardon for having pulled down the partition. It was rebuilt; the mandarin learned French, and the two friends continued upon the beſt terms poſſible with each other during the remainder of the viſit.

The Cheſterfieldian ſyſtem of endeavouring to pleaſe by diſſimulation, is obviouſly diſtinguiſhable by any common capacity from the uſual forms of civility. There is no hope of educating young people to a love of integrity in any family where this practice is adopted; if children obſerve that their parents deceive common acquaintance, by pretending to like the company, and to eſteem the characters, of thoſe whom they really think diſagreeable and contemptible, how can they learn to reſpect truth? how can children believe in the praiſe of their parents, if they detect them in continual flattery towards indifferent people? It may be thought, by latitudinarians in politeneſs, that we are too rigid in expecting this ſtrict adherence to truth from people who live in ſociety; it may be ſaid, that in Practical Education no ſuch Utopian ideas of perfection ſhould be ſuggeſted. If we thought them Utopian, we certainly ſhould not waſte our time upon them; but we do not here ſpeak theoretically of what may be done, we ſpeak of what

has been done. Without the affectation of using a more sanctified language than other people, without departing from the common forms of society, without any painful, awkward efforts, we believe that parents may, in all their conversation in private and in public, set their children the uniform example of truth and integrity.

We do not mean that the example of parents can alone produce this effect; a number of other circumstances must be combined. Servants must have no communication with children, if you wish to teach them the habit of speaking truth. The education, and custom, and situation of servants, are at present such, that it is morally impossible to depend upon their veracity in their intercourse with children. Servants think it good-natured to try to excuse and conceal all the little faults of children, to give them secret indulgences, and even positively to deny facts, in order to save them from blame or punishment. Even when they are not fond of the children, their example must be dangerous, because servants do not scruple to falsify for their own advantage; if they break any thing, what a multitude of equivocations! if they neglect any thing, what a variety of excuses! What evasions in action, or in words, do they continually invent!

It may be said, that as the Spartans taught their children to detest drunkenness, by shewing them intoxicated Helots, we can make falsehood odious and contemptible to our pupils, by the daily example of its mean deformity. But if children, before they can perceive the general advantage of integrity, and before they can understand the utility of truth, see the partial immediate *success* of falsehood, how can they avoid believing in their own experience?

rience? If they ſee that ſervants eſcape blame, and ſkreen themſelves from puniſhment, by telling falſehoods, they not only learn that falſehood preſerves from pain, but they feel obliged to thoſe who practiſe it for their ſakes; thus it is connected with the feelings of affection and of gratitude in their hearts, as well as with a ſenſe of pleaſure and ſafety. When ſervants have exacted promiſes from their *protégés*, thoſe promiſes cannot be broken without treachery; thus deceit brings on deceit, and the ideas of truth and falſehood become confuſed, and contradictory. In the chapter upon ſervants we have expatiated upon this ſubject, and have endeavoured to point out how all communication between children and ſervants may be moſt effectually prevented. To that chapter, without further repetition, we refer. And now that we have adjuſted the preliminaries concerning parents and ſervants, we may proceed with confidence.

When young children firſt begin to ſpeak, from not having a ſufficient number of words to expreſs their ideas, or from not having annexed preciſe ideas to the words which they are taught to uſe, they frequently make miſtakes, which are attributed to the deſire of deceiving. We ſhould not precipitately ſuſpect them of falſehood; it is ſome time before they perfectly underſtand what we mean by truth. Small deviations ſhould not be marked with too much rigour; but whenever a child relates *exactly* any thing which he has ſeen, heard, or felt, we ſhould liſten with attention and pleaſure, and we ſhould not ſhew the leaſt doubt of his veracity. Rouſſeau is perfectly right in adviſing, that children ſhould never be queſtioned in any circumſtances in which it can be their intereſt to deceive. We ſhould, at leaſt, treat children with the ſame degree of wiſe lenity, which the Engliſh law extends to all who

who have arrived at years of diſcretion. No criminal is bound to accuſe himſelf. If any miſchief has been committed, we ſhould never, when we are uncertain by whom it has been done, either directly accuſe, or betray injurious ſuſpicions. We ſhould neither ſay to the child, "I believe you have done this," nor "I believe "you have not done this;" we ſhould ſay nothing; the miſchief is done, we cannot repair it: becauſe a glaſs is broken, we need not ſpoil a child; we may put glaſſes out of his reach in future. If it ſhould, however, happen, that a child voluntarily comes to us with a hiſtory of an accident, may no love of goods or chattels, of windows, of china, or even of looking-glaſſes, come in competition with our love of truth? An angry word, an angry look, may intimidate the child, who has ſummoned all his little courage to make this confeſſion. It is not requiſite that parents ſhould pretend to be pleaſed and gratified with the deſtruction of their furniture, but they may, it is to be hoped, without diſſimulation, ſhew that they ſet more value upon the integrity of their children, than upon a looking-glaſs, and they will "keep their temper ſtill, "though china fall."

H——, one day when his father and mother were abſent from home, broke a looking-glaſs. As ſoon as he heard the ſound of the returning carriage, he ran and poſted himſelf at the hall door. His father, the moment he got out of the carriage, beheld his erect figure, and pale, but intrepid countenance. "Father," ſaid the boy, "I have *broke* the beſt looking-glaſs in your houſe!" His father aſſured him, that he would rather all the looking-glaſſes in his houſe ſhould be broken, than that one of his children ſhould attempt to make an excuſe. H—— was moſt agreeably relieved from his anxiety by the kindneſs of his father's voice and manner, and

ſtill more ſo, perhaps, by perceiving that he roſe in his eſteem. When the glaſs was examined, it appeared that the boy had neglected to produce all the circumſtances in his own favour. Before he had begun to play at ball, he had had the precaution to turn the back of the looking-glaſs towards him; his ball, however, accidentally ſtruck againſt the wooden back, and broke the glaſs. H—— did not make out this favourable ſtate of the caſe for himſelf at firſt; he told it ſimply after the buſineſs was ſettled, ſeeming much more intereſted about the fate of the glaſs, than eager to exculpate himſelf.

There is no great danger of teaching children to do miſchief by this indulgence to their accidental misfortunes. When they break, or waſte any thing, from pure careleſſneſs, let them, even when they ſpeak the truth about it, ſuffer the natural conſequences of their careleſſneſs; but at the ſame time praiſe their integrity, and let them diſtinctly feel the difference between the ſlight inconvenience to which they expoſe themſelves by ſpeaking the truth, and the great diſgrace to which falſehood would ſubject them. The pleaſure of being eſteemed, and truſted, is early felt, and the conſciouſneſs of deſerving confidence is delightful to children; but their young fortitude and courage ſhould never be expoſed to ſevere temptations. It is not ſufficient to excite an admiration of truth by example, by eloquent praiſe, or by the juſt rewards of eſteem and affection; we muſt take care to form the habits at the ſame time that we inſpire the love of this virtue. Many children admire truth, and feel all the ſhame of telling falſehoods, who yet, either from habit or from fear, continue to tell lies. We muſt obſerve, that though the taſte for praiſe is ſtrong in childhood, yet it is not a match for any of the bodily appetites, when they are ſtrongly excited. Thoſe children, who are reſtrained as to the choice, or the quantity,

quantity, of their food, uſually think that eating is a matter of vaſt conſequence, and they are ſtrongly tempted to be diſhoneſt to gratify their appetites. Children do not underſtand the prudential maxims concerning health, upon which theſe reſtraints are founded; and if they can "by any indirection" obtain things which gratify their palate, they will. On the contrary, young people, who are regularly let to eat and drink as much as they pleaſe, can have no temptation from hunger and thirſt to deceive; if they partake of the uſual family meals, and if there are no whimſical diſtinctions between wholeſome and unwholeſome diſhes, or epicurean diſtinctions between rarities and plain food, the imagination and the pride of children will not be rouſed about eating. Their pride is piqued if they perceive, that they are prohibited from touching what *grown up people* are privileged to eat; their imagination is ſet to work by ſeeing any extraordinary difference made by judges of eating between one ſpecies of food and another. In families where a regularly good table is kept, children accuſtomed to the ſight and taſte of all kinds of food, are ſeldom delicate, capricious, or diſpoſed to exceed; but in houſes where entertainments are made from time to time with great buſtle and anxiety, fine clothes, and company-manners, and company-faces, and all that politeneſs can do to give the appearance of feſtivity, deceive children at leaſt, and make them imagine that there is ſome extraordinary joy in ſeeing a greater number of diſhes than uſual upon the table. Upon theſe occaſions, indeed, the pleaſure is to them ſubſtantial; they eat more, they eat a greater variety, and of things that pleaſe them better than uſual; the pleaſure of eating is aſſociated with unuſual cheerfulneſs, and thus the imagination, and the reality, conſpire to make them epicures. To theſe children the temptations to deceive about ſweetmeats and dainties

are

are beyond meaſure great, eſpecially as ill-bred ſtrangers commonly ſhew their affection for them by preſſing them to eat what they are not allowed to ſay "*if you pleaſe*" to. Rouſſeau thinks all children are gluttons. All children may be rendered gluttons, but few, who are properly treated with reſpect to food, and who have any literary taſtes, can be in danger of continuing to be fond of eating. We therefore, without heſitation, recommend it to parents never to hazard the truth and honour of their pupils by prohibitions, which ſeldom produce any of the effects that are expected.

Children are ſometimes injudiciouſly reſtrained with regard to exerciſe; they are required to promiſe to keep within certain boundaries when they are ſent out to play; theſe promiſes are often broken with impunity, and thus the children learn habits of ſucceſsful deceit. Inſtead of circumſcribing their play grounds, as they are ſometimes called, by narrow inconvenient limits, we ſhould allow them as much ſpace as we can with convenience, and at all events exact no promiſes. We ſhould abſolutely make it impoſſible for them to go without detection into any place which we forbid. It requires ſome patience and activity in preceptors to take all the neceſſary precautions in iſſuing orders, but theſe precautions will be more uſeful in preſerving the integrity of their pupils, than the moſt ſevere puniſhments that can be deviſed. We are not ſo unreaſonable as to expect, with ſome theoretic writers on education, that tutors and parents ſhould ſacrifice the whole of their time to the convenience, amuſement, and education of their pupils. This would be putting one ſet of beings "*ſadly over the "head of another:*" but if parents would, as much as poſſible, mix their occupations and recreations with thoſe of their children, be-

ſides many other advantages which have been elſewhere pointed out with reſpect to the improvement of the underſtanding, they would ſecure them from many temptations to falſehood. They ſhould be encouraged to talk freely of all their amuſements to their parents, and to aſk them for whatever they want to complete their little inventions. Inſtead of baniſhing all the freedom of wit and humour, by the auſterity of his preſence, a preceptor, with ſuperior talents, and all the reſources of property in his favour, might eaſily become the *arbiter deliciarum* of his pupils.

When young people begin to taſte the pleaſures of praiſe, and to feel the ſtrong excitations of emulation and ambition, their integrity is expoſed to a new ſpecies of temptation. They are tempted, not only by the hope of obtaining "well-earned praiſe," but by the deſire to obtain praiſe without the labour of earning it. In large ſchools, where boys aſſiſt each other in their literary exerciſes, and in all private families where maſters are allowed to ſhew off the accompliſhments of young gentlemen and ladies, there are ſo many temptations to fraudulent exhibitions, that we deſpair of guarding againſt their conſequences. The beſt poſſible method is to inſpire children with a generous contempt for flattery, and to teach them to judge impartially of their own merits. If we are exact in the meaſure of approbation which we beſtow, they will hence form a ſcale by which they can eſtimate the ſincerity of other people. It is ſaid * that the preceptor of the duke of Burgundy ſucceeded ſo well in inſpiring him with diſdain for unmerited praiſe, that when the duke was only nine years old, he one day called his tu-

* V. The Life of the Duke of Burgundy in Madame de la Fite's agreeable and inſtructive work for children, "Contes, Drames et Entretiens, &c."

tor

tor to account for having concealed ſome of his childiſh faults; and when this promiſing boy, and ſingular prince, was aſked "why he diſliked one of his courtiers," he anſwered, "Becauſe "he flatters me." Anecdotes ſuch as theſe will make a uſeful impreſſion upon children. The life of Cyrus, in the Cyropædia; ſeveral paſſages in Plutarch's Lives; and the lively, intereſting picture which Sully draws of his noble-hearted maſter's love of truth, will ſtrongly command the admiration of young people, if they read them at a proper time of life. We muſt, however, wait for this proper time; for if theſe things are read too early, they loſe all their effect. Without any lectures upon the beauty of truth, we may, now and then in converſation, when occurrences in real life naturally lead to the ſubject, expreſs with energy our eſteem for integrity. The approbation which we beſtow upon thoſe who give proofs of integrity, ſhould be quite in a different tone, in a much higher ſtyle of praiſe, than any commendations for trifling accompliſhments; hence children will become more ambitious to obtain a reputation for truth, than for any other leſs honourable and leſs honoured qualification.

We will venture to give two or three ſlight inſtances of the unaffected truth and ſimplicity of mind, which we have ſeen in children educated upon theſe principles. No good-natured reader will ſuſpect, that they are produced from oſtentation: whenever the children, who are mentioned, ſee this in print, it is ten to one that they will not be ſurpriſed at their own good deeds. They will be a little ſurpriſed, probably, that it ſhould have been thought worth while to record things, which are only what they ſee and feel every day. It is this character of every-day goodneſs which we wiſh to repreſent; not any fine thoughts, fine ſentiments, or fine

actions, which come out for holiday admiration. We wish that parents, in reading any of these little anecdotes, may never exclaim, "Oh that's charming, that's surprising *for a child*;" but we wish that they may sometimes smile, and say, "That's very "natural; I am sure *that* is perfectly true; my little boy, or my "little girl, say and do just such things continually."

March 1792. We were at Clifton; the river Avon ran close under the windows of our house in Prince's Place, and the children used to be much amused with looking at the vessels which came up the river. One night a ship, that was sailing by the windows, fired some of her guns; the children, who were looking out of the windows, were asked "why the light was seen when the guns "were fired; the noise was not heard?" C——, who at this time was nine years old, answered, "Because light comes quicker "to the eye, than sound to the ear." Her father was extremely pleased with this answer: but just as he was going to kiss her, the little girl said, "Father, the reason I knew it was, that L—— "(her elder brother) just before had told it to me."

There is, it is usually found, most temptation for children to deceive when they are put in competition with each other, when their ambition is excited by the same object; but if the transient glory of excelling in quickness, and abilities of any sort, be much inferior to the permanent honour which is secured by integrity, there is even in competition no danger of unfair play.

March 1792. One evening —— called the children round the tea-table, and told them the following story, which he had just met with in "The Curiosities of Literature."

When

When the queen of Sheba went to visit king Solomon, she one day presented herself before his throne with a wreath of real flowers in one hand, and a wreath of artificial flowers in the other hand; the artificial flowers were made so exactly to resemble nature, that at the distance at which they were held from Solomon it was scarcely possible that his eye could distinguish any difference between them and the natural flowers; or could he, at the distance at which they were held from him, know them asunder by their smell. "Which of these two wreaths," demanded the queen of Sheba, "is the work of nature?" Solomon reflected for some minutes, and how did he discover which was real? S—— (five years old) *replied*, "Perhaps he went out of the room "very *softly*, and if the woman stood near the door, as he went "near her, he might *see better*."

Father. But Solomon was not to move from his place.

S——. Then he might wait till the woman was tired of holding them, and then perhaps she might lay them down on the table, and then perhaps he might *see better*.

Father. Well, C——, what do you say?

C——. I think he might have looked at the stalks, and have seen which looked stiff like wire, and which were bent down by the weight of the natural flowers.

Father. Well, H——?

H——

H—— (ten years old). I think he might ſend for a great pair of bellows, and blow, blow, till the real leaves dropped off.

Father. But would it not have been ſomewhat uncivil of Solomon to *blow*, *blow*, with his great pair of bellows, full in the queen of Sheba's face?

H—— (doubting). Yes, yes. Well, then he might have ſent for a teleſcope, or a magnifying glaſs, and looked through it; and then he could have ſeen which were the real flowers, and which were artificial.

Father. Well, B——, and what do you ſay?

B—— (eleven years old). He might have waited till the queen moved the flowers, and then, if he liſtened, he might hear the ruſtling of the artificial ones.

Father. S——, have you any thing more to ſay?

S—— repeated the ſame thing that B—— had ſaid; his attention was diſſipated by hearing the other children ſpeak. During this pauſe, whilſt S—— was trying to collect his thoughts, Mrs. E—— whiſpered to ſomebody near her, and accidentally ſaid the word *animals* loud enough to be overheard.

Father. Well, H——, you look as if you had ſomething to ſay?

H——.

H——. Father, I heard my mother ſay ſomething, and *that* made me think of the reſt.

Mrs. E—— ſhook hands with H——, and praiſed him for this inſtance of integrity. H—— then ſaid that "he ſuppoſed Solo-
"mon thought of ſome *animal* which would feed upon flowers,
"and ſent it to the two noſegays; and then the animal would ſtay
"upon the real flowers."

Father. What animal?

H——. A fly.

Father. Think again.

H——. A bee.

Father. Yes.

The ſtory ſays that Solomon, ſeeing ſome bees hover about the window, ordered the window to be thrown open, and watched upon which wreath of flowers the bee ſettled.

Auguſt 1ſt, 1796. S—— (nine years old), when he was reading in Ovid the fable of Perſeus and Andromeda, ſaid that he wondered that Perſeus fought with the monſter, he wondered that Perſeus did not turn him into ſtone at once with his Gorgon ſhield. We believe that S—— ſaw that his father was pleaſed with this obſervation. A few days afterwards ſomebody in the family recollected Mr. E——'s having ſaid, that when he was a boy he thought

thought Perſeus a ſimpleton for not making uſe of the Gorgon's head to turn the monſter into ſtone. We were not ſure whether S—— had heard Mr. E—— ſay this or not; Mr. E—— aſked him whether he recollected to have heard any ſuch thing. S—— anſwered, without heſitation, that he did remember it.

When children have formed *habits* of ſpeaking truth, and when we ſee that theſe habits are grown quite eaſy to them, we may venture to queſtion them about their thoughts and feelings; this muſt, however, be done with great caution, but without the appearance of anxiety or ſuſpicion. Children are alarmed if they ſee that you are very anxious and impatient for their anſwer, they think that they hazard much by their reply; they heſitate, and look eagerly in your face, to diſcover by your countenance what they ought to think and feel, and what ſort of anſwer you expect. All who are governed by any ſpecies of fear are diſpoſed to equivocation. Amongſt the lower claſs of Iriſh labourers, and *under-tenants*, a claſs of people who are much oppreſſed, you can ſcarcely meet with any man who will give you a direct anſwer to the moſt indifferent queſtion; their whole ingenuity, and they have a great deal of ingenuity, is upon the *qui vive* with you the inſtant you begin to ſpeak; they either pretend not to hear, that they may gain time to think, whilſt you repeat your queſtion, or they reply to you with a freſh queſtion, to draw out your remote meaning; for they, judging by their own habits, always think you have a remote meaning, and they never can believe that your words have no intention to enſnare: ſimplicity puzzles them much more than wit. For inſtance, if you were to aſk the moſt direct and harmleſs queſtion, as, "Did it rain yeſterday?" the firſt anſwer would probably be, "Is it yeſterday you mean?" "Yes." "Yeſterday! "No,

No, pleaſe your honour, I was not at the bog at all yeſterday. Wasn't I after ſetting my potatoes? Sure I did not know your honour wanted me at all yeſterday. Upon my conſcience there's not a man in the country, let alone all Ireland, I'd ſooner ſerve than your honour any day in the year, and they have belied me that went behind my back to tell your honour the contrary. If your honour ſent after me, ſure I never *got the word*, I'll take my affidavit, or I'd been at the bog." "My good friend, I don't know what you mean about the bog, I only aſk you whether it rained yeſterday." "Pleaſe your honour, I couldn't get a car and horſe any way, to draw home my little ſtraw, or I'd have had the houſe thatched long ago." "Cannot you give me a plain anſwer to this plain queſtion? Did it rain yeſterday?" "Oh ſure, I wouldn't go to tell your honour a lie about the matter. Sarrah much it rained yeſterday after twelve o'clock, barring a few ſhowers; but in the night there was a great fall of rain any how; and that was the reaſon prevented my going to Dublin yeſterday, for fear the miſtreſs's band-box ſhould get wet upon my cars. But, pleaſe your honour, if your honour's diſpleaſed about it, I'll not be waiting for a loading, I'll take my car and go to Dublin to-morrow for the ſlates, if that be what your honour means. Oh, ſure I would not tell a lie for the entire price of the ſlates; I know very well it didn't rain to call rain yeſterday. But after twelve o'clock, I don't ſay I noticed it one way or other."

In this perverſe and ludicrous method of beating about the buſh, the man would perſiſt till he had fairly exhauſted your patience; and all this he would do partly from cunning, and partly from that apprehenſion of injuſtice which he has been taught to feel by hard experience. The effects of the example of their parents is early

and moſt ſtrikingly viſible in the children of this claſs of people in Ireland. The children, who are remarkably quick and intelligent, are univerſally addicted to lying: we do not here ſcruple or heſitate in the choice of our terms, becauſe we are convinced that this unqualified aſſertion would not ſhock the feelings of the parties concerned; theſe poor children are not brought up to think falſehood a diſgrace; they are praiſed for the ingenuity with which they eſcape from the croſs examination of their ſuperiors; and their capacities are admired in proportion to the *acuteneſs*, or, as their parents pronounce it, '*cuteneſs* of their equivocating replies. Sometimes (the *garcon* *) the little boy of the family is diſpatched by his mother to the landlord's neighbouring bog or turf rick, to *bring home*, in their phraſeology, in ours *to ſteal*, a few turf: if upon this expedition the little Spartan be detected, he is tolerably certain of being whipped by his mother, or ſome of his friends, upon his return home. "Ah, ye little brat! and what made ye "tell the gentleman when he met ye, ye rogue, that ye were "going to the rick? And what buſineſs had ye to go and belie me "to his honour, ye unnatural piece of goods! I'll teach ye to "make miſchief through the country! So I will. Have ye got "no better ſenſe and manners at this time o'day, than to behave, "when one truſts ye abroad, ſo like an innocent?" An innocent in Ireland, as formerly in England, (witneſs the Rape of the Lock) is ſynonimous with a fool. "And fools and innocents ſhall ſtill "believe."

The aſſociations of pleaſure, of pride, and gaiety, are ſo ſtrong in the minds of theſe well educated children, that they ſometimes

* Pronounced goſſoon.

expect the very people, who ſuffer by their diſhoneſty, ſhould ſympathiſe in the ſelf-complacency they feel from roguery. A gentleman riding near his own houſe in Ireland, ſaw a cow's head and fore feet appear at the *top of a ditch* through a gap in the hedge by the road's ſide, at the ſame time he heard a voice alternately threatening and encouraging the cow: the gentleman rode up cloſer to the ſcene of action, and he ſaw a boy's head appear behind the cow. "My good boy," ſaid he, "that's a fine cow." "Oh, faith, that ſhe "is," replied the boy, "and I'm teaching her to get her own living, "pleaſe your honour." The gentleman did not preciſely underſtand the meaning of the expreſſion, and had he directly aſked for an explanation, would probably have died in ignorance; but the boy, proud of his cow, encouraged an exhibition of her talents: ſhe was made to jump acroſs the ditch ſeveral times, and this adroitneſs in breaking through fences was termed "getting her own living." As ſoon as a cow's education is finiſhed ſhe may be ſent looſe into the world to provide for herſelf; turned to graze in the pooreſt paſture, ſhe will be able and willing to live upon the fat of the land.

It is curious to obſerve how regularly the ſame moral cauſes produce the ſame temper and character; we talk of climate, and frequently attribute to climate the different diſpoſitions of different nations: the climate of Ireland, and that of the Weſt Indies, are not preciſely ſimilar, yet the following deſcription, which Mr. Edwards, in his hiſtory of the Weſt Indies, gives of the propenſity to falſehood amongſt the negro ſlaves, might ſtand word for word for a character of that claſs of the Iriſh people who, till very lately, actually, not metaphorically, called themſelves *ſlaves*.

" If a negro is aſked even an indifferent queſtion by his maſter, " he ſeldom gives an immediate reply; but affecting not to un- " derſtand what is ſaid, compels a repetition of the queſtion, that " he may have time to conſider, not what is the true anſwer, but " what is the moſt politic one for him to give."

Mr. Edwards aſſures us, that many of theſe unfortunate negroes learn cowardice and falſehood after they become ſlaves; when they firſt come from Africa many of them ſhew * " a frank and fear- " leſs temper;" but all diſtinction of character amongſt the native Africans is ſoon loſt under the levelling influence of ſlavery. Oppreſſion and terror neceſſarily produce meanneſs and deceit in all climates, and in all ages; and wherever fear is the governing motive in education, we muſt expect to find in children a propenſity to diſſimulation, if not confirmed habits of falſehood. Look at the true born Briton under the government of a tyrannical pedagogue, and liſten to the language of *inborn* truth; in the whining tone, in the pitiful evaſions, in the ſtubborn falſehoods which you hear from the ſchoolboy, can you diſcover any of that innate dignity of ſoul which is the boaſted national characteriſtic? Look again; look at the ſame boy in the company of thoſe who inſpire no terror; in the company of his ſchoolfellows, of his friends, of his parents; would you know him to be the ſame being? his countenance is open, his attitude erect, his voice firm, his language free and fluent, his thoughts are upon his lips, he ſpeaks truth without effort, without fear. Where individuals are oppreſſed, or where they believe that they are oppreſſed, they combine againſt

* Edwards's Hiſtory Weſt Indies, vol. ii.

their

their oppreſſors, and oppoſe cunning and falſehood to power and force; they think themſelves releaſed from the compact of truth with their maſters, and bind themſelves in a ſtrict league with each other; thus ſchoolboys hold no faith with their ſchoolmaſter, though they would think it ſhameful to be diſhonourable amongſt one another. We do not think that theſe maxims are the peculiar growth of ſchools; in private families the ſame feelings are to be found under the ſame ſpecies of culture: if preceptors or parents are unjuſt or tyrannical, their pupils will contrive to conceal from them their actions and their thoughts. On the contrary, in families where ſincerity has been encouraged by the voice of praiſe and affection, a generous freedom of converſation and countenance appears, and the young people talk to each other, and to their parents, without diſtinction or reſerve; without any diſtinction but ſuch as ſuperior eſteem and reſpect dictate: theſe are feelings totally diſtinct from ſervile fear, theſe feelings inſpire the love of truth, the ambition to acquire and to preſerve character.

The value of a character for truth ſhould be diſtinctly felt by children in their own family: whilſt they were very young we adviſed that their integrity ſhould not be tempted; as they grow up truſt ſhould by degrees be put in them, and we ſhould diſtinctly explain to them that our confidence is to be deſerved before it can be given: our belief in any perſon's truth is not a matter of affection, but of experience and neceſſity; we cannot doubt the aſſertions of any perſon whom we have found to ſpeak uniformly the truth; we cannot believe any perſon, let us wiſh to do it ever ſo much, if we have detected him in falſehoods. Before we have had experience of a perſon's integrity, we may hope, or take it for granted, that he is perfectly ſincere and honeſt; but we cannot feel more than *belief upon truſt*, till we have actually

ſeen

ſeen his integrity tried. We ſhould not pretend that we have faith in our pupils before we have tried them; we may hope from their habits, from the examples they have ſeen, and from the advantageous manner in which truth has always been repreſented to them, that they will act honourably; this hope is natural and juſt, but confidence is another feeling of the mind. The firſt time we truſt a child, we ſhould not ſay, "I am ſure you will not deceive me; I can truſt you with any thing in the world." This is flattery or folly; it is paying beforehand, which is not the way to get buſineſs done; why cannot we, eſpecially as we are teaching truth, ſay the thing that is. "I *hope* you will not deceive me. If I find "that you may be truſted, you know I ſhall be able to truſt you "another time: this muſt depend upon you, not entirely upon "me." We muſt make ourſelves certain upon theſe occaſions, how the child conducts himſelf; nor is it neceſſary to uſe any artifice, or to affect from falſe delicacy any ſecurity that we do not feel; it is better openly to ſay, "You ſee, I do you the juſtice to "examine carefully, how you have conducted yourſelf; I wiſh to "be able to truſt you another time."

It may be ſaid, that this method of ſtrict inquiry reduces a truſt to no truſt at all, and that it betrays ſuſpicion. If you examine evidently with the belief that a child has deceived you, certainly you betray injurious ſuſpicion, and you educate the child very ill; but if you feel and expreſs a ſtrong deſire to find that your pupil has conducted himſelf honourably, he will be glad and proud of the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny; he will feel that he has earned your future confidence, and this confidence, which he clearly knows how he has obtained, will be more valuable to him than all the belief upon truſt which you could affect to feel. By degrees, after your pupil has

has taught you to depend upon him, your confidence will prevent the neceſſity of any examination into his conduct. This is the juſt and delightful reward of integrity; children know how to feel and underſtand it thoroughly; beſides the many reſtraints from which our confidence will naturally relieve them, they feel the pride of being truſted, the honour of having a character for integrity: nor can it be too ſtrongly impreſſed upon their minds, that this character muſt be preſerved, as it was obtained, by their own conduct. If one link in the chain of confidence be broken, the whole is deſtroyed. Indeed, where habits of truth are early formed, we may ſafely depend upon them; a young perſon who has never deceived would ſee, that the firſt ſtep in falſehood coſts too much to be hazarded. Let this appear in the form of calculation rather than of ſentiment: to habit, to enthuſiaſm, we owe much of all our virtues, to reaſon more; and the more of them we owe to reaſon the better: habit and enthuſiaſm are ſubject to ſudden or gradual changes, but reaſon continues for ever the ſame. As the underſtanding unfolds we ſhould fortify all our pupil's good habits, and virtuous enthuſiaſm, by the conviction of their utility, of their being eſſential to the happineſs of ſociety in general, and conducive immediately to the happineſs of every individual: poſſeſſed of this conviction, and provided with ſubſtantial arguments in its ſupport, young people will not be expoſed to danger, either from ſophiſtry or ridicule.

Ridicule certainly is not the teſt of truth; but it is a teſt which truth ſometimes find it difficult to ſtand. Vice never "bolts her "arguments" with more ſucceſs, than when ſhe aſſumes the air of raillery, and the tone of gaiety. All vivacious young people are fond of wit; we do not mean children, for they do not underſtand it;

it; thoſe who have the beſt capacities, and the ſtricteſt habits of veracity, often appear to common obſervers abſolutely ſtupid, from their averſion to any play upon words, and from the literal ſimplicity with which they believe every thing that is aſſerted. A remarkably intelligent little girl of four years old, but who had never in her own family been uſed to the common phraſes which ſometimes paſs for humour, happened to hear a gentleman ſay, as he looked out of the window one rainy morning, "It rains cats "and dogs to day:" the child with a ſurpriſed, but believing look, immediately went to look out of the window to ſee the phænomenon. This extreme ſimplicity in childhood is ſometimes ſucceeded in youth by a ſtrong taſte for wit and humour: young people are, in the firſt place, proud to ſhew that they underſtand them, and they are gratified by the perception of a new intellectual pleaſure. At this period of their education great attention muſt be paid to them, leſt their admiration for wit and frolic ſhould diminiſh their reverence and their love for ſober truth. In many engaging characters in ſociety, and in many entertaining books, deceit and diſhoneſty are aſſociated with ſuperior abilities, with eaſe and gaiety of manners, and with a certain air of frank careleſſneſs which can ſcarcely fail to pleaſe. Gil Blas*, Tom Jones, Lovelace, Count Fathom, are all of this claſs of characters; they ſhould not be introduced to our pupils till their habits of integrity are thoroughly formed, and till they are ſufficiently ſkilfu in analyſing their own feelings, to diſtinguiſh whence their approbation and pleaſure in reading of theſe characters ariſe. In books we do not actually ſuffer by the tricks of rogues, or by the lies they tell; hence their truth is to us a quality of no value;

* See Mrs. Macaulay's Letters on Education.

but

but their wit, humour, and the ingenuity of their contrivances, are of great value to us, becauſe they afford us entertainment: the moſt honeſt man in the univerſe may not have had half ſo many adventures as the greateſt rogue; in a romance, the hiſtory upon oath of all the honeſt man's bargains and ſales, lawſuits and loſſes, nay, even a complete view of his ledger, and day-book, together with the regular balancings of his accounts, would probably not afford quite ſo much entertainment, even to a reader of the moſt unblemiſhed integrity and phlegmatic temper, as the adventures of Gil Blas, and Jonathan Wild, adorned with all the wit of Le Sage, and humour of Fielding. When Gil Blas lays open his whole heart to us, and tells us all his ſins, unwhipt of juſtice, we give him credit for making us his confidant, and we forget that this ſincerity, and theſe liberal confeſſions are not characteriſtic of the hero's diſpoſition, but eſſential only to the novel. The novel writer could not tell us all he had to ſay without this dying confeſſion, and inconſiſtent openneſs from his accompliſhed villain; the reader is ready enough to forgive, having never been duped. When young people can make all theſe reflections for themſelves, they may read Gil Blas with as much ſafety as the life of Franklin, or any other the moſt moral performance. "Tout eſt ſain aux ſains *," as Madame de Sevignè very judiciouſly obſerves in one of her letters upon the choice of books for her grand-daughter. We refer for more detailed obſervations upon this ſubject to the chapter upon books. But we cannot help here reiterating our advice to preceptors, not to force the deteſtable characters, which are ſometimes held up to admiration in ancient and modern hiſtory, upon the

* Every thing is healthful to the healthy.

common ſenſe, or, if they pleaſe, the moral feelings of their pupils. The bad actions of *great* characters ſhould not be palliated by eloquence, and fraud and villany ſhould never be explained away by the hero's or warrior's code; a code which confounds all juſt ideas of right and wrong. Boys, in reading the claſſics, muſt read of a variety of crimes, but that is no reaſon that they ſhould approve of them, or that their tutors ſhould undertake to vindicate the cauſe of falſehood and treachery. A gentleman, who has taught his ſons Latin, has uniformly purſued the practice of abandoning to the juſt and prompt indignation of his young pupils all the ancient heroes who are deficient in moral honeſty: his ſons, in reading Cornelius Nepos, could not abſolutely comprehend, that the treachery of Themiſtocles or of Alcibiades could be applauded by a wiſe and poliſhed nation. Xenophon has made an eloquent attempt to explain the nature of military good faith; Cambyſes tells his ſon, that, in taking advantage of an enemy, a man muſt be "crafty, deceitful, a diſſembler, a thief, and a robber." Oh Jupiter! exclaims the young Cyrus, what a man, my father, you ſay I muſt be! And he very ſenſibly aſks his father, why, if it be neceſſary in ſome caſes to enſnare and deceive men, he had not in his childhood been taught by his preceptors the art of doing harm to his fellow-creatures, as well as of doing them good. "And why," ſays Cyrus, "have I always been puniſhed whenever I have been diſcovered in practiſing deceit?" The anſwers of Cambyſes are by no means ſatisfactory upon this ſubject: nor do we think that the converſation between the old general and Mr. Williams* could

* See Mr. Williams's Lectures on Education, where Xenophon is quoted, page 16, &c. vol. ii.—alſo p. 31.

have

have made the matter perfectly intelligible to the young gentleman, whose ſcrupulous integrity made him object to the military profeſſion.

It is certain, that many perſons of ſtrict honour and honeſty in ſome points, on others are utterly inconſiſtent in their principles: thus it is ſaid, that private integrity and public corruption frequently meet in the ſame character; thus ſome gentlemen are jockies, and they have a convenient latitude of conſcience as jockies, whilſt they would not for the univerſe cheat a man of a guinea in any way but in the ſale of a horſe: others in gambling, others in love, others in war, think all ſtratagems fair. We endeavour to think that theſe are all honourable men; but we hope, that we are not obliged to lay down rules for the formation of ſuch moral prodigies in a ſyſtem of practical education.

We are aware that with children *, who are educated at public ſchools, truth and integrity cannot be taught preciſely in the ſame manner as in private families; becauſe uſhers and ſchoolmaſters cannot pay the ſame hourly attention to each of their pupils, nor have they the command of all the neceſſary circumſtances. There are, however, ſome advantages attending the early commerce which numbers of children at public ſeminaries have with each other; they find that no ſociety can ſubſiſt without truth; they feel the utility of this virtue, and, however they may deal with their maſters, they learn to ſpeak truth towards each other. This partial ſpecies of honeſty, or rather of honour, is not the very beſt of its kind, but it may eaſily be improved into a more rational principle of

* Vide Williams.

action. It is illiberal to aſſert, that any virtue is to be taught only by one proceſs of education: many different methods of education may produce the ſame effects. Men of integrity and honour have been formed both by private and public education; neither ſyſtem ſhould be excluſively ſupported by thoſe, who really wiſh well to the improvement of mankind. All the errors of each ſyſtem ſhould be impartially pointed out, and ſuch remedies as may moſt eaſily be adopted with any hope of ſucceſs ſhould be propoſed. We think, that if parents paid ſufficient attention to the habits of their children, from the age of three to ſeven years old, they would be properly prepared for public education; they would not then bring with them to public ſchools all that they have learned of vice and falſehood in the company of ſervants*. We have purpoſely repeated all this in hopes of impreſſing it ſtrongly. May we ſuggeſt to the maſters of theſe important ſeminaries, that Greek and Latin, and all the elegance of claſſical literature, are matters but of ſecondary conſequence compared with thoſe habits of truth, which are eſſential to the character and happineſs of their pupils? By rewarding the moral virtues more highly than the mere diſplay of talents, a generous emulation to excel in theſe virtues may with certainty be excited.

Many preceptors and parents will readily agree, that Bacon, in his "general diſtribution of human knowledge," was perfectly right not to omit that branch of philoſophy, which his lordſhip terms "*The doctrine of riſing in the world.*" To this art integrity at length becomes neceſſary; for talents, whether for buſineſs or for oratory, are now become ſo cheap, that they cannot alone en-

* V. Servants and "Public and Private Education."

ſure

ſure preeminence to their poſſeſſors. The public opinion, which in England beſtows celebrity, and neceſſarily leads to honour, is intimately connected with the public confidence. Public confidence is not the ſame thing as popularity ; the one may be won, the other muſt be earned. There is amongſt all parties, who at preſent aim at political power, an unſatisfied demand for honeſt men. Thoſe who ſpeculate in this line for their children, will do wiſely to keep this fact in their remembrance during their whole education.

We have delayed, from a full conſciouſneſs of the difficulty of the undertaking, to ſpeak of the method of curing either the habits or the propenſity to falſehood. Phyſicians, for mental as well as bodily diſeaſes, can give long hiſtories of maladies; but are ſurpriſingly conciſe when they come to treat of the method of cure. With patients of different ages, and different temperaments, to ſpeak with due medical ſolemnity, we ſhould adviſe different remedies. With young children we ſhould be moſt anxious to break the habits; with children at a more advanced period of their education, we ſhould be moſt careful to rectify the principles. Children, before they reaſon, act merely from habit, and without having acquired command over themſelves, they have no power to break their own habits; but when young people reflect, and deliberate, their principles are of much more importance than their habits, becauſe their principles, in fact, in moſt caſes govern their habits; it is in conſequence of their deliberations and reflections that they act, and before we can change their way of acting, we muſt change their way of thinking.

To break *habits* of falſehood in young children, let us begin by

by removing the temptation, whatever it may be. For inſtance, if the child has the habit of denying that he has ſeen, heard, or done things which he has ſeen, heard, and done, we muſt not, upon any account, either queſtion about any of theſe particulars, but we ſhould forbear to give him any pleaſure which he might hope to obtain by our faith in his aſſertions. Without entering into any explanations, we ſhould abſolutely * diſregard what he ſays, and with looks of cool contempt turn away without liſtening to his falſities. A total change of occupations, new objects, eſpecially ſuch as excite and employ the ſenſes, will be found highly advantageous. Sudden pleaſure, from ſtrong expreſſions of affection, or eloquent praiſe, whenever the child ſpeaks truth, will operate powerfully in breaking his habits of equivocation. We do not adviſe parents to try ſudden pain with children at this early age, neither do we adviſe bodily correction, or laſting *penitences*, meant to excite ſhame, becauſe theſe depreſs and enfeeble the mind, and a propenſity to falſehood ultimately ariſes from weakneſs and timidity. Strengthen the body and mind by all means; try to give the pupils command over themſelves upon occaſions where they have no opportunities of deceiving: the ſame command of mind and courage, proceeding from the conſciouſneſs of ſtrength and fortitude, may, when once acquired, be exerted in any manner we direct. A boy who tells a falſehood to avoid ſome trifling pain, or to procure ſome trifling gratification, would perhaps dare to ſpeak the truth, if he were certain that he could bear the pain, or do without the gratification. Without talking to him about truth or falſehood, we ſhould begin by exerciſing him in the art of bearing and forbearing. The ſlighteſt trials are beſt for beginners, ſuch as their fortitude can bear, for ſucceſs is neceſſary to increaſe their courage.

* Rouſſeau and Williams.

Madame

Madame de Genlis, in her Adéle and Théodore, gives Theodore, when he is about ſeven years old, a box of ſugar-plums to take care of, to teach him to command his paſſions. Theodore produces the untouched treaſure to his mother, from time to time, with great ſelf-complacency. We think this a good practical leſſon. Some years ago the experiment was tried, with complete ſucceſs, upon a little boy between five and ſix years old. This boy kept raiſins and almonds in a little box in his pocket, day after day, without ever thinking of touching them. His only difficulty was to remember at the appointed time, at the week's end, to produce them; the raiſins were regularly counted from time to time, and were, when found to be right, ſometimes given to the child, but not always. When for ſeveral weeks the boy had faithfully executed his truſt, the time was extended for which he was to keep the raiſins, and every body in the family expreſſed that they were now certain, before they counted the raiſins, that they ſhould find the number exact. This confidence, which was not pretended confidence, pleaſed the child, but the reſt he conſidered as a matter of courſe. We think ſuch little trials as theſe might be made with children of five or ſix years old, to give them early habits of exactneſs. The boy we have juſt mentioned has grown up with a more unblemiſhed reputation for truth, than any child with whom we were ever acquainted. This is the ſame boy who broke the looking-glaſs, page 198.

When a patient far advanced in his childhood is yet to be cured of a propenſity to deceive, the buſineſs becomes formidable. It is dangerous to ſet our vigilance in direct oppoſition to his cunning, and it is yet more dangerous to truſt, and give him opportunities of freſh deceit. If the pupil's temper is timid, fear has probably been

been his chief inducement to diſſimulation. If his temper is ſanguine, hope and ſucceſs, and perhaps the pleaſure of inventing ſchemes, or of outwitting his ſuperiors, have been his motives. In one caſe we ſhould prove to the patient, that he has nothing to fear from ſpeaking the truth to us; in the other caſe we ſhould demonſtrate to him, that he has nothing to hope from telling us falſehoods. Thoſe who are pleaſed with the ingenuity of cunning, ſhould have opportunities of ſhewing their ingenuity in honourable employments, and the higheſt praiſe ſhould be given to their ſucceſsful abilities whenever they are thus exerted. They will compare their feelings when they are the objects of eſteem, and of contempt, and they will be led permanently to purſue what moſt tends to their happineſs. We ſhould never deprive them of the hope of eſtabliſhing a character for integrity; on the contrary, we ſhould explain diſtinctly to them, that this is abſolutely in their own power. Examples from real life will ſtrike the mind of a young perſon juſt entering into the world, much more than any fictitious characters, or moral ſtories; and ſtrong indignation, expreſſed incidentally, will have more effect than any lectures prepared for the purpoſe. We do not mean, that any artifice ſhould be uſed to make our leſſons impreſſive; but there is no artifice in ſeizing opportunities, which muſt occur in real life, to exemplify the advantages of a good character. The opinions which young people hear expreſſed of actions in which they have no ſhare, and of characters with whom they are not connected, make a great impreſſion upon them. The horror which is ſhewn to falſehood, the ſhame which overwhelms the culprit, they have then leiſure to contemplate; they ſee the effects of the ſtorm at a diſtance; they dread to be expoſed to its violence, and they will prepare for their own ſecurity. When any ſuch ſtrong impreſſion has been made upon the mind, we ſhould

ſeize that moment to connect new principles with new habits of action: we ſhould try the pupil in ſome ſituation in which he has never been tried before, and where he conſequently may feel hope of obtaining reputation, if he deſerves it, by integrity. All reproaches upon his former conduct ſhould now be forborn, and he ſhould be allowed to feel, in full ſecurity, the pleaſures, and the honours, of his new character.

We cannot better conclude a chapter upon Truth, than by honeſtly referring the reader to a charming piece of eloquence, with which Mr. Godwin concludes his eſſay upon Deception and Frankneſs *. We are ſenſible how much we ſhall loſe by the compariſon: we had written this chapter before we ſaw his eſſay.

* V. The Enquirer, p. 101.

CHAPTER IX.

ON REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

To avoid, in education, all unneceſſary ſeverity, and all dangerous indulgence, we muſt form juſt ideas of the nature and uſe of rewards and puniſhments. Let us begin with conſidering the nature of puniſhment, ſince it is beſt to get the moſt diſagreeable part of our buſineſs done the firſt.

Several benevolent and enlightened authors * have endeavoured to explain the uſe of penal laws, and to correct the ideas which formerly prevailed concerning public juſtice. Puniſhment is no longer conſidered, except by the ignorant and ſanguinary, as vengeance from the injured, or expiation from the guilty. We now diſtinctly underſtand, that the greateſt poſſible happineſs of the whole ſociety muſt be the ultimate object of all juſt legiſlation; that the partial evil of puniſhment is conſequently to be tolerated by the wiſe and humane legiſlator, only ſo far as it is proved to be neceſſary for the general good. When a crime has been committed, it cannot be undone by all the art, or all the power of man; by vengeance the

* Beccaria, Voltaire, Blackſtone, &c.

moſt ſanguinary, or remorſe the moſt painful. The paſt is irrevocable; all that remains is to provide for the future. It would be abſurd, after an offence has already been committed, to increaſe the ſum of miſery in the world by inflicting pain upon the offender, unleſs that pain were afterwards to be productive of happineſs to ſociety, either by preventing the criminal from repeating his offence, or by deterring others from ſimilar enormities. With this double view, of reſtraining individuals, by the recollection of paſt ſufferings, from future crimes, and of teaching others, by public examples, to expect, and to fear, certain evils as the neceſſary conſequences of certain actions hurtful to ſociety, all wiſe laws are framed, and all juſt puniſhments are inflicted. It is only by the conviction that certain puniſhments are eſſential to the general ſecurity and happineſs, that a perſon of humanity can, or ought, to fortify his mind againſt the natural feelings of compaſſion. Theſe feelings are the moſt painful, and the moſt difficult to reſiſt, when, as it ſometimes unavoidably happens, public juſtice requires the total ſacrifice of the happineſs, liberty, or perhaps the life, of a fellow-creature, whoſe ignorance precluded him from virtue, and whoſe neglected or depraved education prepared him, by inevitable degrees, for vice and all its miſeries. How exquiſitely painful muſt be the feelings of a humane judge in pronouncing ſentence upon ſuch a devoted being! But the law permits of no refined metaphyſical diſquiſitions: it would be vain to plead the neceſſitarian's doctrine of an unavoidable connexion between the paſt and the future, in all human actions; the ſame neceſſity compels the puniſhment, that compelled the crime; nor could, nor ought, the moſt eloquent advocate, in a court of juſtice, to obtain a criminal's acquittal by entering into a minute hiſtory of the errors of his education.

It is the buſineſs of education to prevent crimes, and to prevent all thoſe habitual propenſities which neceſſarily lead to their commiſſion. The legiſlator can conſider only the large intereſts of ſociety, the preceptor's view is fixed upon the individual intereſts of his pupil. Fortunately both muſt ultimately agree. To ſecure for his pupil the greateſt poſſible quantity of happineſs, taking in the whole of life, muſt be the wiſh of the preceptor: this includes every thing. We immediately perceive the connexion between that happineſs, and obedience to all the laws on which the proſperity of ſociety depends. We yet further perceive, that the probability of our pupil's yielding not only an implicit, but an habitual, rational, voluntary, happy obedience, to ſuch laws, muſt ariſe from the connexion which *he* believes, and feels that there exiſts, between his ſocial duties and his ſocial happineſs. How to induce this important belief is the queſtion.

It is obvious, that we cannot explain to the comprehenſion of a child of three or four years old all the truths of morality; or can we demonſtrate to him the juſtice of puniſhments, by ſhewing him that we give preſent pain to enſure future advantage. But though we cannot demonſtrate to the child that we are juſt, we may ſatisfy ourſelves upon this ſubject, and we may conduct ourſelves during his non-age of underſtanding with the ſcrupulous integrity of a guardian. Before we can govern by reaſon, we can, by aſſociating pain or pleaſure with certain actions, give habits, and theſe habits will be either beneficial or hurtful to the pupil: we muſt, if they be hurtful habits, conquer them by freſh puniſhments, and thus we make the helpleſs child ſuffer for our negligence and miſtakes. Formerly in Scotland there exiſted a law, which obliged every farrier, who through ignorance or drunkenneſs pricked a horſe's foot

in

in ſhoeing him, to depoſit the price of the horſe till he was found, to furniſh the owner with another, and in caſe the horſe could not be cured, the farrier was doomed to indemnify the injured owner. At the ſame rate of puniſhment, what indemnification ſhould be demanded from a careleſs or ignorant preceptor ?

When a young child puts his finger too near the fire, he burns himſelf; the pain immediately follows the action, they are aſſociated together in the child's memory; if he repeat the experiment often, and conſtantly with the ſame reſult, the aſſociation will be ſo ſtrongly formed, that the child will ever afterwards expect theſe two things to happen together: whenever he puts his finger into fire, he will expect to feel pain; he will yet further, as theſe things regularly follow one another, learn to think one the cauſe, and the other the effect. He may not have words to expreſs theſe ideas; or can we explain how the belief that events, which have happened together, will again happen together, is by experience induced in the mind. This is a fact, which no metaphyſicians pretend to diſpute, but it has not yet, that we know of, been accounted for by any. It would be raſh to aſſert, that it will not in future be explained, but at preſent we are totally in the dark upon the ſubject. It is ſufficient for our purpoſe to obſerve, that this aſſociation of facts, or of ideas, affects the actions of all rational beings, and of many animals who are called irrational. Would you teach a dog or a horſe to obey you ? Do you not aſſociate pleaſure, or pain, with the things you wiſh that they ſhould practiſe, or avoid ? The impatient and ignorant give infinitely more pain than is neceſſary to the animals they educate. If the pain, which we would aſſociate with any action, do not *immediately* follow it, the child does not underſtand us; if ſeveral events happen nearly at the ſame time,

it

it is impoſſible that a child can at firſt diſtinguiſh which are cauſes and which are effects. Suppoſe, that a mother would teach her little ſon, that he muſt not put his dirty ſhoes upon her clean ſofa: if ſhe frowns upon him, or ſpeaks to him in an angry tone, at the inſtant that he ſets his foot and ſhoe upon the ſofa, he deſiſts; but he has only learned, that putting a foot upon the ſofa, and his mother's frown, follow each other; his mother's frown, from former aſſociations, gives him perhaps ſome pain, or the expectation of ſome pain, and conſequently he avoids repeating the action which immediately preceded the frown. If, a ſhort time afterwards, the little boy, forgetting the frown, accidentally gets upon the ſofa *without his ſhoes*, no evil follows; but it is not probable, that he can by this ſingle experiment diſcover, that his ſhoes have made all the difference in the two caſes. Children are frequently ſo much puzzled by their confuſed experience of impunity and puniſhment, that they are quite at a loſs how to conduct themſelves. Whenever our puniſhments are not made intelligible, they are cruel; they give pain, without producing any future advantage. To make puniſhment intelligible to children, it muſt be not only *immediately*, but *repeatedly* and *uniformly*, aſſociated with the actions which we wiſh them to avoid.

When children begin to reaſon, puniſhment affects them in a different manner from what it did whilſt they were governed, like irrational animals, merely by the direct aſſociations of pleaſure and pain. They diſtinguiſh, in many inſtances, between coincidence and cauſation; they diſcover, that the will of others is the immediate cauſe, frequently, of the pain they ſuffer: they learn by experience, that the *will* is not an unchangeable cauſe, that it is influenced by

circumſtances, by paſſions, by perſuaſion, by caprice. It muſt be, however, by ſlow degrees, that they acquire any ideas of juſtice. They cannot know our views relative to their future happineſs; their firſt ideas of the juſtice of the puniſhments we inflict cannot therefore be accurate. They regulate theſe firſt judgments by the ſimple idea, that our puniſhments ought to be exactly the ſame always in the ſame circumſtances; when they underſtand words, they learn to expect that our words and actions ſhould preciſely agree, that we ſhould keep our promiſes, and *fulfil* our threats. They next learn, that as they are puniſhed for voluntary faults, they cannot juſtly be puniſhed till it has been diſtinctly explained to them what is *wrong* or *forbidden*, and what is *right* or *permitted*. The words *right* or *wrong*, and *permitted* or *forbidden*, are ſynonymous at firſt in the apprehenſions of children; and obedience and diſobedience are their only ideas of virtue and vice. Whatever we command to be done, or rather whatever we aſſociate with pleaſure, they imagine to be right; whatever we prohibit, provided we have uniformly aſſociated it with pain, they believe to be wrong. This implicit ſubmiſſion to our authority, and theſe confined ideas of right and wrong, are convenient, or apparently convenient, to indolent or tyrannical governors; and they ſometimes endeavour to prolong the reign of ignorance, with the hope of eſtabliſhing in the mind an opinion of their own infallibility. But this is a dangerous as well as an unjuſt ſyſtem. By compariſon with the conduct and opinions of others children learn to judge of their parents and preceptors; by reading and by converſation they acquire more enlarged notions of right and wrong; and their obedience, unleſs it then ariſe from the conviction of their underſtandings, depends but on a very precarious foundation. The mere aſſociation of pleaſure and pain, in the form of reward and puniſhment,

puniſhment, with any given action will not govern them; they will now examine whether there is any moral or phyſical *neceſſary* connexion between the action and puniſhment; nor will they believe the puniſhment they ſuffer to be a conſequence of the action they have committed, but rather a conſequence of their being obliged to ſubmit to the will of thoſe, who are ſtronger or more powerful than they are themſelves. Unjuſt puniſhments do not effect their intended purpoſe, becauſe the pain is not aſſociated with the action which we would prohibit; but, on the contrary, it is aſſociated with the idea of our tyranny; it conſequently excites the ſentiment of hatred towards us, inſtead of averſion to the forbidden action. When once, by reaſoning, children acquire even a vague idea that thoſe who educate them are unjuſt, it is in vain either to puniſh or reward them; if they ſubmit, or if they rebel, their education is equally ſpoiled; in the one caſe they become cowardly, in the other headſtrong. To avoid theſe evils there is but one method; we muſt early ſecure reaſon for our friend, elſe ſhe will become our unconquerable enemy. As ſoon as children are able, in any inſtance, to underſtand the meaning and nature of puniſhment, it ſhould in that inſtance be explained to them. Juſt puniſhment is pain inflicted with the reaſonable hope of preventing greater pain in future. In a family, where there are ſeveral children educated together, or in public ſchools, puniſhments may be inflicted with juſtice for the ſake of example, but ſtill the reformation and future good of the ſufferer is always a principal object; and of this he ſhould be made ſenſible. If our practice upon all occaſions correſpond with our theory, and if children really perceive, that we do not puniſh them to gratify our own ſpleen or paſſion, we ſhall not become, even when we give them pain, objects of their hatred. The pain will not be aſſociated with us, but,

as it ought to be, with the fault which was the real cauſe of it. As much as poſſible we ſhould let children feel the natural conſequences of their own conduct. The natural conſequence of ſpeaking truth is the being believed; the natural conſequence of falſehood is the loſs of truſt and confidence; the natural conſequence of all the uſeful virtues is eſteem, of all the amiable virtues love, of each of the prudential virtues ſome peculiar advantage to their poſſeſſor. But plum-pudding is not the appropriate reward of truth, or is the loſs of it the natural or neceſſary conſequence of falſehood. Prudence is not to be rewarded with the affection due to humanity; or is humanity to be recompenſed with the eſteem claimed by prudence. Let each good and bad quality have its proper ſhare of praiſe and blame, and let the conſequences of each follow as conſtantly as poſſible. That young people may form a ſteady judgment of the danger of any vice, they muſt uniformly perceive, that certain painful conſequences reſult from its practice. It is in vain that we inflict puniſhments, unleſs all the precepts and all the examples which they ſee confirm them in the ſame belief.

In the unfortunate ſon of Peter the Great we have a ſtriking inſtance of the effects of a diſagreement between precept and example *, which in a leſs elevated ſituation might have eſcaped our notice. It ſeems as if the different parts and ſtages of his education had been purpoſely contrived to counteract each other. Till he was eleven years old, he was committed to the care of women, and of ignorant bigotted prieſts, who were continually inveighing againſt his father for the abolition of certain barbarous cuſtoms.

* See Cox's Travels, vol. ii. 189.

Then

Then came baron Huyſen for his governor, a ſenſible man, who had juſt begun to make ſomething of his pupil, when prince Menzikof inſiſted upon having the ſole management of the unfortunate Alexey. Prince Menzikof abandoned him to the company of the loweſt wretches; who encouraged him in continual ebriety, and in a taſte for every thing mean and profligate. At length came Euphroſyne, his Finlandiſh miſtreſs, who upon his trial for rebellion depoſed to every angry expreſſion which, in his moſt unguarded moments, the wretched ſon had uttered againſt the tyrannical father. Amidſt ſuch ſcenes of contradictory experience, can we be ſurpriſed, that Alexey Petrovitch became feeble, ignorant, and profligate; that he rebelled againſt the father whom he had early been taught to fear and hate; that he liſtened to the pernicious counſels or the companions who had, by pretended ſympathy and flattery, obtained that place in his confidence which no parental kindneſs had ever ſecured? Thoſe hiſtorians who are zealous for the glory of Peter the Great have eagerly refuted, as a moſt atrocious calumny, the report of his having had any part in the myſterious death of his ſon. But how will they apologize for the Czar's neglect of that ſon's education, from which all the misfortunes of his life aroſe?

But all this is paſt for ever; the only advantage we can gain from recalling theſe circumſtances, is a confirmation of this important principle in education; that, when precept and example counteract one another, there is no hope of ſucceſs. Nor can the utmoſt ſeverity effect any uſeful purpoſe, whilſt the daily experience of the pupil contradicts his preceptor's leſſons. In fact, ſeverity is ſeldom neceſſary in a well conducted education. The ſmalleſt poſſible degree of pain, which can in any caſe produce

the required effect, is indiſputably the juſt meaſure of the puniſhment which ought to be inflicted in any given caſe. This ſimple axiom will lead us to a number of truths, which immediately depend upon or reſult from it. We muſt attend to every circumſtance which can diminiſh the quantity of pain, without leſſening the efficacy of puniſhment. Now it has been found from experience, that there are ſeveral circumſtances which operate uniformly to this purpoſe. We formerly obſerved, that the effect of puniſhment upon the minds of children, before they reaſon, depends much upon its *immediately* ſucceeding the fault, and alſo upon its being certainly repeated whenever the ſame fault is committed. After children acquire the power of reaſoning, from a variety of new motives, theſe laws with reſpect to puniſhment derive additional force. A trifling degree of pain will anſwer the purpoſe, if it be made inevitable; whilſt the fear of an enormous proportion of uncertain puniſhment will not be found ſufficient to govern the mind. The contemplation of a diſtant puniſhment, however ſevere, does not affect the imagination with much terror, becauſe there is ſtill a ſecret hope of eſcape in the mind. Hence it is found from experience, that the moſt ſanguinary penal laws have always been ineffectual to reſtrain from crimes *. Even if detection be inevitable, and conſequent puniſhment equally inevitable, if puniſhment be not inflicted as ſoon as the criminal is convicted, it has been found, that it has not, either as a preventative, or a public example, the ſame power upon the human mind. Not only ſhould the puniſhment be immediate after conviction, but detection ſhould follow the offence as ſpeedily as poſſible. Without entering at large into the intricate argument concerning identity

* See Beccaria, Blackſtone, Colquhoun.

and

and conciouſneſs, we may obſerve, that the conſciouſneſs of having committed the offence for which he ſuffers ought at the time of ſuffering to be ſtrong in the offender's mind. Though proofs of his identity may have been legally eſtabliſhed in a court of juſtice, and though, as far as it relates to public juſtice, it matters not whether the offence for which he is puniſhed has been committed yeſterday or a year ago; yet, as to the effect which the puniſhment produces on the culprit's own mind, there muſt be a material difference.

" I deſire you to judge of me, not by what I was, but by what " I am," ſaid a philoſopher when he was reproached for ſome of his paſt tranſgreſſions. If the interval between an offence and its puniſhment be long, it is poſſible that during this interval a complete change may be made in the views and habits of the offender; ſuch a change as ſhall abſolutely preclude all probability of his repeating his offence. His puniſhment muſt then be purely for the ſake of example to others. He ſuffers pain at the time, perhaps, when he is in the beſt ſocial diſpoſitions poſſible; and thus we puniſh the preſent good man for the faults of the former offender. We readily excuſe the violence which a man in a paſſion may have committed, when upon his return to his ſober ſenſes he expreſſes contrition and ſurpriſe at his own exceſſes; he aſſures us, and we believe him, that he is now a perfectly different perſon. If we do not feel any material ill conſequences from his late anger, we are willing, and even deſirous, that the paſſionate man ſhould not in his ſober ſtate be puniſhed for his madneſs; all that we can deſire is, to have ſome ſecurity againſt his falling into any freſh fit of anger: could his habits of temper be inſtantly changed, and could we have a moral certainty that his phrenzy would

would never more do us any injury, would it not be malevolent and unjuſt to puniſh him for his old inſanity? If we think and act upon theſe principles with reſpect to men, how much more indulgent ſhould we be to children? Indulgence is perhaps an improper word. But in other words, how careful ſhould we be never to chain children to their dead faults*! Children during their education muſt be in a continual ſtate of progreſſion; they are not the ſame to-day that they were yeſterday; they have little reflection, their conſciouſneſs of the preſent occupies them, and it would be extremely difficult from day to day, or from hour to hour, to identify their minds. Far from wiſhing that they ſhould diſtinctly remember all their paſt thoughts, and that they ſhould value themſelves upon their continuing the ſame, we muſt frequently deſire that they ſhould forget their former errors, and abſolutely change their manner of thinking. They ſhould feel no intereſt in adhering to former bad habits or falſe opinions, therefore their pride ſhould not be rouſed to defend theſe by our making them a part of their ſtanding character. The character of children is *to be* formed, we ſhould never ſpeak of it as poſitively fixed. Man has been defined to be a bundle of habits; till the bundle is made up we may continually increaſe or diminiſh it. Children who are zealous in defence of their own perfections, are of all others moſt likely to become ſtationary in their intellectual progreſs, and diſingenuous in their temper. It would be in vain to repeat to them this ſenſible and elegant obſervation, "To confeſs that you have "been in the wrong, is only ſaying in other words, that you are "wiſer to-day than you were yeſterday." This remark will rather pique than comfort the pride of thoſe, who are anxious to

* Mezentius. VIRGIL.

prove

prove that they have been equally wiſe and immaculate in every day of their exiſtence.

It may be ſaid, that children cannot too early be made ſenſible of the value of reputation, and that they muſt be taught to connect the ideas of their paſt and preſent *ſelves*, otherwiſe they cannot perceive, for inſtance, why confidence ſhould be placed in them in proportion to their paſt integrity; or why falſehood ſhould lead to diſtruſt. The force of this argument muſt be admitted; yet ſtill we muſt conſider the age and ſtrength of mind in children in applying it to practice. Truth is not inſtinctive in the mind, and the ideas of integrity, and of the advantages of reputation, muſt be very cautiouſly introduced, leſt, by giving children too perfect a theory of morality before they have ſufficient ſtrength of mind to adhere to it in practice, we make them hypocrites, or elſe give them a fatal diſtruſt of themſelves, founded upon too early an experience of their own weakneſs, and too great ſenſibility to ſhame.

Shame, when once it becomes familiar to the mind, loſes its effect; it ſhould not therefore be uſed as a common puniſhment for ſlight faults. Nor ſhould we truſt very early in education to the delicate ſecret influence of conſcience; but we ſhould take every precaution to prevent the neceſſity of having recourſe to the puniſhment of diſgrace; and we muſt, if we mean to preſerve the power of conſcience, take care that it be never diſregarded with impunity. We muſt avoid oppoſing it to ſtrong temptation, nor ſhould we ever try the integrity of children, except in ſituations where we can be perfectly certain of the reſult of the experiment. We muſt neither run the riſk of injuring them by unjuſt ſuſpicions, nor

nor unmerited confidence. By prudent arrangements, and by unremitted daily attention, we ſhould abſolutely prevent the poſſibility of deceit. By giving few commands, or prohibitions, we may avoid the danger of either ſecret or open diſobedience. By diminiſhing temptations to do wrong, we act more humanely than by multiplying reſtraints and puniſhments.

It has been found, that no reſtraints or puniſhments have proved adequate to enſure obedience to laws, whenever ſtrong temptations, and many probabilities of evaſion, combine in oppoſition to conſcience or fear. The terrors of the law have been for years ineffectually directed againſt a race of beings called ſmugglers: yet ſmuggling is ſtill an extenſive, lucrative, and not univerſally diſcreditable, profeſſion. Let any perſon look into the hiſtory of the exciſe laws *, and he will be aſtoniſhed at the accumulation of penal ſtatutes, which the active, but vain, ingenuity of prohibitory legiſlators has deviſed in the courſe of about thirty years. Open war was declared againſt all illegal diſtillers; yet the temptation to illegal diſtilling continually increaſed, in proportion to the heavy duties laid upon the fair trader. It came at length to a trial of ſkill between revenue officers and diſtillers, which could cheat, or which could detect the faſteſt. The diſtiller had the ſtrongeſt intereſt in the buſineſs, and he uſually came off victorious. *Courſing officers*, and *watching officers*, (once ten *watching officers* were ſet upon one diſtiller) and *ſurveyors*, and *ſupervifors*, multiplied without end: the land in their fiſcal maps was portioned out into *diviſions*, and *diſtricts*, and each gauger had the charge of all the diſtillers in his diviſion: the watching officer went firſt, and the courſing officer

* V. An Inquiry into the Principles of Taxation, p. 37, publiſhed in 1790.

ficer went after him, and after him the ſupervifor ; and they had *table-books*, and *gauging-rods*, and *dockets*, and *permits*, permits for ſellers, and permits for buyers, and permits for foreign ſpirits, printed in red ink, and permits for Britiſh ſpirits, in black ink ; and they went about night and day with their hydrometers, to aſcertain the ſtrength of ſpirits ; and with their gauging-rods, to meaſure *waſh*. But the pertinacious diſtiller was ſtill flouriſhing ; permits were forged ; concealed pipes were fabricated ; and the proportion between the *waſh* and *ſpirits* was ſeldom legal. The commiſſioners complained, and the legiſlators went to work again. Under a penalty of £100 diſtillers were ordered to paint the words *diſtiller*, *dealer in ſpirits*, over their doors ; and it was further enacted, that all the diſtillers ſhould furniſh, at their own expence, any kind of locks, and faſtenings, which the revenue officers ſhould require for locking up the doors of their own furnaces, the heads of their own ſtills, pumps, pipes, &c. Firſt ſuſpicions fell upon the public diſtiller for exportation, then his utenſils were locked up ; afterwards the private diſtiller was ſuſpected, and he was locked up : then they ſet him and his furnaces at liberty, and went back in a paſſion to the public diſtiller. The legiſlature condeſcended to interfere, and with a new lock and key, preciſely deſcribed in an act of parliament, it was hoped all would be made ſecure. Any perſon being a diſtiller, who ſhould lock up his furnace or pipes with a key conſtructed differently from that which the act deſcribed, or any perſon making ſuch illegal key for ſaid diſtiller, was ſubject to the forfeiture of £100. The padlock was never fixed upon the mind, and even the lock and key, preſcribed by act of parliament, were found inefficacious. Any common blackſmith, with a picklock in his poſſeſſion, laughed at the combined ſkill of the two houſes of parliament.

This digreſſion from the rewards and puniſhments of children to the diſtillery laws, may, it is hoped, be pardoned, if the uſeful moral can be drawn from it, that where there are great temptations to fraud, and continual opportunities of evaſion, no laws, however ingenious, no puniſhments, however exorbitant, can avail. The hiſtory of coiners, venders, and utterers, of his majeſty's coin, as lately detailed to us by reſpectable authority *, may afford further illuſtration of this principle.

There is no imminent danger of children's becoming either coiners or fraudulent diſtillers, but an ingenious preceptor will not be much puzzled in applying the remarks that have been made to the ſubject of education. For the anticlimax in deſcending from the legiſlation of men to the government of children, no apology is attempted.

The fewer the laws we make for children, the better. Whatever they may be, they ſhould be diſtinctly expreſſed; the letter and ſpirit ſhould both agree, and the words ſhould bear but one ſignification clear to all the parties concerned. They ſhould never be ſubject to the ex poſt facto interpretation of an angry preceptor, or a cunning pupil; no looſe general terms ſhould permit tyranny, or encourage quibbling. There is ſaid † to be a Chineſe law, which decrees, that whoever does not ſhew *proper reſpect* to the ſovereign is to be puniſhed with death. What is meant by the words *proper*

* Colquhoun. On the Police of the Metropolis.

† V. The Grand Inſtructions to the commiſſioners appointed to frame a new code of laws for the Ruſſian empire, p. 183, ſaid to be drawn up by the late Lord Manſfield.

reſpect

reſpect is not defined. Two perſons made a miſtake in ſome account of an inſignificant affair in one of their court gazettes. It was declared, that *to lie* in a court gazette is to be wanting in *proper reſpect* to the court. Both the careleſs ſcribes were put to death. One of the princes of the blood inadvertently put ſome mark upon a memorial, which had been ſigned by the emperor Bogdo Chan. This was conſtrued to be a want of *proper reſpect* to Bogdo Chan the emperor, and a horrible perſecution hence aroſe againſt the ſcrawling prince and his whole family. May no ſchoolmaſters, uſhers, or others, ever (even as far as they are able) imitate Bogdo Chan, and may they always define to their ſubjects what they mean by *proper reſpect!*

There is a ſort of miſtaken mercy ſometimes ſhewn to children, which is, in reality, the greateſt cruelty. People, who are too angry to refrain from threats, are often too indolent, or too compaſſionate, to put their threats in execution. Between their words and actions there is hence a manifeſt contradiction; their pupils learn, from experience, either totally to diſregard theſe threats, or elſe to calculate, from the various degrees of anger which appear in the threatener's countenance, what real probability there is of his being as good or as bad as his word. Far from perceiving that puniſhment, in this caſe, is *pain given with the reaſonable hope of making him wiſer or happier*, the pupil is convinced, that his maſter puniſhes him only to gratify the paſſion of anger, to which he is unfortunately ſubject. Even ſuppoſing that threateners are exact in fulfilling their threats, and that they are not paſſionate, but ſimply wiſh to avoid giving pain; they endeavour to excite the fears of their pupils as the means of governing them with the leaſt poſſible pain. But with fear they excite all the paſſions and habits

which are connected with that mean principle of action, and they extinguish that vigorous spirit, that independent energy of soul, which is essential to all the active and manly virtues. Young people, who find that their daily pleasures depend not so much upon their own exertions as upon the humour and caprice of others, become absolute courtiers; they practise all the arts of persuasion, and all the crouching hypocrisy which can deprecate wrath, or propitiate favour. Their notions of right and wrong cannot be enlarged; their recollection of the rewards and punishments of their childhood are alway connected with the ideas of tyranny and slavery; and when they break their own chains, they are impatient to impose similar bonds upon their inferiors.

An argument has been used to prove, that in some cases anger is part of the *justice* of punishment, because "mere *reproof*, without sufficient marks of *displeasure* and *emotion*, affects a child "very little, and is soon forgotten*." It cannot be doubted, that the expression of indignation is a just consequence of certain faults, and the general indignation with which these are spoken of before young people must make a strong and useful impression upon their minds. They reflect upon the actions of others; they see the effects which these produce upon the human mind; they put themselves in the situation alternately of the person who expresses indignation, and of him who suffers shame; they measure the fault and its consequences, and they resolve to conduct themselves so as to avoid that just indignation of which they dread to be the object. These are the general conclusions which children draw when they

* V. Dr Priestley's Miscellaneous Observations relating to Education, sect. vii. of correction, p. 67.

are *impartial ſpectators*; but where they are themſelves concerned, their feelings and their reaſonings are very different. If they have done any thing which they know to be wrong, they expect, and are ſenſible that they deſerve, diſpleaſure and indignation; but if any preciſe penalty is annexed to the fault, the perſon who is to inflict it appears to them in the character of a judge, who is bound to repreſs his own feelings, and coolly to execute juſtice. If the judge both reproaches and puniſhes, he doubles the puniſhment. Whenever indignation is expreſſed, no vulgar trivial penalties ſhould accompany it; the pupil ſhould feel that it is indignation againſt his fault, and not againſt himſelf; and that it is not excited in his preceptor's mind by any petty perſonal conſiderations. A child diſtinguiſhes between anger and indignation very exactly; the one commands his reſpect, the other raiſes his contempt as ſoon as his fears ſubſide. Dr. Prieſtley ſeems to think, that "it is not "poſſible to expreſs diſpleaſure with ſufficient *force*, eſpecially to "a child, when a man is perfectly cool." May we not reply to this, that it is ſcarcely poſſible to expreſs diſpleaſure with ſufficient *propriety*, eſpecially to a child, when a man is in a paſſion. The propriety is in this caſe of at leaſt as much conſequence as the force of the reprimand. The effect which the preceptor's diſpleaſure will produce muſt be in ſome proportion to the eſteem which his pupil feels for him. If he cannot command his iraſcible paſſions, his pupil cannot continue to eſteem him, and there is an end of all that fear of his diſapprobation, which was founded upon eſteem, and which can never be founded upon a ſtronger or a better baſis. We ſhould further conſider, that the opinions of all the byſtanders, eſpecially if they be any of them of the pupil's own age, have great influence upon his mind: it is not to be expected, that they ſhould all ſympathiſe equally with the angry preceptor; and we know,

that

that whenever the indignation expreſſed againſt any fault appears in the leaſt to paſs the bounds of exact juſtice, the ſympathy of the ſpectators immediately revolts in favour of the culprit; the fault is forgotten or excuſed, and all join in ſpontaneous compaſſion. In public ſchools this happens ſo frequently, that the maſter's diſpleaſure ſeldom affects the little community with any ſorrow; combined with one another, they make each other amends for public puniſhments by private pity or encouragement. In families which are not well regulated, that is to ſay, in which the intereſts of all the individuals do not coaleſce, the ſame evils are to be dreaded. Neither indignation nor *ſhame* can affect children in ſuch ſchools, or ſuch families; the laws and manners, public precept and private opinion, contradict one another.

In a variety of inſtances in ſociety, we may obſerve, that the beſt laws and the beſt principles are not ſufficient to reſiſt the combination of numbers. Never attempt to affix infamy to a number of people at once, ſays a philoſophic legiſlator *: this advice ſhewed, that he perfectly underſtood the nature of the paſſion of ſhame. Numbers keep one another in countenance, they form a ſociety for themſelves; and ſometimes by peculiar phraſes, and an appropriate language, confound the eſtabliſhed opinions of virtue and vice, and enjoy a ſpecies of ſelf-complacency independent of public opinion, and often in direct oppoſition to their former *conſcience*. Wherever any ſet of men want to get rid of the ſhame annexed to particular actions, they begin by changing the names and epithets which have been generally uſed to expreſs them, and which they know are aſſociated with the feelings of ſhame:

* V. Code of Ruſſian laws.

theſe

theſe feelings are not awakened by the new language, and by degrees they are forgotten, or they are ſuppoſed to have been merely prejudices and habits, which *former methods of ſpeaking* taught people to reverence. Thus the moſt diſgraceful combinations of men, who live by violating and evading the laws of ſociety, have all a peculiar phraſeology amongſt themſelves, by which jocular ideas are aſſociated with the moſt diſreputable actions.

Thoſe who live by depredation on the river Thames do not call themſelves thieves, but *lumpers* and *mudlarks*. Coiners give regular mercantile names to the different branches of their trade, and to the various kinds of falſe money which they circulate. Such as *flats*, or *figs*, or *figthings*. Unlicenſed lottery wheels are called *little goes*, and the men who are ſent about to public houſes to entice poor people into illegal lottery inſurances, are called *Morocco-men*; a ſet of villains, hired by theſe fraudulent lottery keepers to reſiſt the civil power during the drawing of the lottery, call themſelves *bludgeon-men*; and in the language of robbers, a receiver of ſtolen goods is ſaid to be *ſtaunch*, when it is believed that he will go all lengths rather than betray the ſecrets of a gang of highwaymen *.

Since words have ſuch power in their turn over ideas, we muſt in education attend to the language of children as a means of judging of the ſtate of their minds; and whenever we find, that in their converſation with one another they have any ſlang, which turns moral ideas into ridicule, we may be certain that this muſt have ariſen from ſome defect in their education. The power of

* Colquhoun.

ſhame muſt then be tried in ſome new ſhape to break this falſe aſſociation of ideas. Shame, in a new ſhape, affects the mind with ſurpriſing force, in the ſame manner as danger in a new form alarms the courage of veterans. An extraordinary inſtance of this may be obſerved in the management of Glouceſter gaol: a blue and yellow jacket has been found to have a moſt powerful effect upon men ſuppoſed to be dead to ſhame. The keeper of the priſon told us, that the moſt unruly offenders could be kept in awe by the dread of a dreſs, which expoſed them to the ridicule of their companions, no new term having been yet invented to counteract the terrors of the yellow jacket. To prevent the mind from becoming inſenſible to ſhame, it muſt be very ſparingly uſed; and the hope and poſſibility of recovering eſteem muſt always be kept alive. Thoſe who are excluded from hope are neceſſarily excluded from virtue; the loſs of reputation, we ſee, is almoſt always followed by total depravity. The cruel prejudices which are harboured againſt particular claſſes of people, uſually tend to make the individuals who are the beſt diſpoſed amongſt theſe ſects deſpair of obtaining eſteem, and, conſequently, careleſs about deſerving it. There can be nothing inherent in the knaviſh propenſity of Jews; but the prevailing opinion, that avarice, diſhoneſty, and extortion, are the characteriſtics of a Jew, has probably induced many of the tribe to juſtify the antipathy which they could not conquer. Children are frequently confirmed in faults by the imprudent and cruel cuſtom which ſome parents have of ſettling early in life, that ſuch a thing is natural; that ſuch and ſuch diſpoſitions are not to be cured; that cunning, perhaps, is the characteriſtic of one child, and caprice of another. This general odium oppreſſes and diſpirits; ſuch children think it is in vain to ſtruggle againſt nature, eſpecially as they do not clearly underſtand what is meant by nature.

They

They ſubmit to our imputations, without knowing how to refute them. On the contrary, if we treat them with more good ſenſe and benevolence, if we explain to them the nature of the human mind, and if we lay open to them the hiſtory of their own; they will aſſiſt us in endeavouring to cure their faults, and they will not be debilitated by indiſtinct ſuperſtitious fears. At ten or eleven years old, children are capable of underſtanding ſome of the general principles of rational morality, and theſe they can apply to their own conduct in many inſtances, which, however trivial they may appear, are not beneath our notice.

June 16th, 1796. S—— (nine years old) had loſt his pencil; his father ſaid to him, "I wiſh to give you another pencil, but I "am afraid I ſhould do you harm if I did, you would not take "care of your things if you did not feel ſome inconvenience when "you loſe them." The boy's lips moved as if he were ſaying to himſelf, "I underſtand this, this is juſt." His father gueſſed that theſe were the thoughts that were paſſing in his mind, and aſked whether he interpreted rightly the motion of the lips. "Yes," ſaid S——, "that was exactly what I was thinking." "Then," ſaid his father, "I will give you a bit of my own pencil this "inſtant; all I want is to make the neceſſary impreſſion upon "your mind; that is all the uſe of puniſhment; you know we do "not want to torment you."

As young people grow up, and perceive the conſequences of their own actions, and the advantages of credit and character, they become extremely ſolicitous to preſerve the good opinion of thoſe whom they love and eſteem. They are now capable of taking the future into their view as well as the preſent; and at this

period of their education the hand of authority ſhould never be haſtily uſed; the voice of reaſon will never fail to make herſelf heard, eſpecially if reaſon ſpeak with the tone of affection. During the firſt years of childhood, it did not ſeem prudent to make any puniſhment laſting, becauſe young children quickly forget their faults, and having little experience, cannot feel how their paſt conduct is likely to affect their future happineſs. But as ſoon as they have more enlarged experience, the nature of their puniſhments ſhould alter; if we have any reaſon to eſteem or love them leſs, our contempt and diſpleaſure ſhould not lightly be diſſipated. Thoſe who reflect are more influenced by the idea of the duration, than of the intenſity of any mental pain. In thoſe calculations which are conſtantly made before we determine upon action or forbearance, ſome tempers eſtimate any evil which is likely to be but of ſhort duration, infinitely below its real importance. Young men of ſanguine and courageous diſpoſitions hence frequently act imprudently; the conſequences of their temerity will, they think, ſoon be over, and they feel that they are able to ſupport evil for a ſhort time, however great it may be. Anger, they know, is a ſhort-lived paſſion, and they do not ſcruple running the hazard of exciting anger in the hearts of thoſe they love the beſt in the world. The experience of laſting, ſober diſapprobation, is intolerably irkſome to them; any inconvenience which continues for a length of time wearies them exceſſively. After they have endured, as the conſequence of any actions, this ſpecies of puniſhment, they will long remember their ſufferings, and will carefully avoid incurring in future ſimilar penalties. Sudden and tranſient pain appears to be moſt effectual with perſons of an oppoſite temperament.

Young people of a torpid, indolent temperament are much under

under the dominion of habit; if they happen to have contracted any diſagreeable or bad habits, they have ſeldom ſufficient energy to break them. The ſtimulus of ſudden pain is neceſſary in this caſe. The pupil may be perfectly convinced, that ſuch a habit ought to be broken, and may wiſh to break it moſt ſincerely; but may yet be incapable of the voluntary exertion requiſite to obtain ſucceſs. It would be dangerous to let the habit, however inſignificant, continue victorious, becauſe the child would hence be diſcouraged from all future attempts to battle with himſelf. Either we ſhould not attempt the conqueſt of the habit, or we ſhould perſiſt till we have vanquiſhed. The confidence, which this ſenſe of ſucceſs will give the pupil, will probably in his own opinion be thought well worthy the price. Neither his reaſon nor his will was in fault; all he wanted was ſtrength to break the diminutive chains of habit; chains which, it ſeems, have power to enfeeble their captives exactly in proportion to the length of time they are worn.

Every body has probably found from their own experience how difficult it is to alter little habits in manners, pronunciation, &c. Children are often teaſed with frequent admonitions about their habits of ſitting, ſtanding, walking, talking, eating, ſpeaking, &c. Parents are early aware of the importance of agreeable, graceful manners; every body who ſees children can judge, or think that they can judge, of their manners; and from anxiety that children ſhould appear to advantage in company, parents ſolicitouſly watch all their geſtures, and correct all their attitudes according to that image of the "*beau idéal*," which happens to be moſt faſhionable. The moſt convenient and natural attitudes are not always the moſt approved; the conſtraint which children ſuffer from their obe-

dience obliges them at length to reſt their tortured muſcles, and to throw themſelves for relief into attitudes the very reverſe of thoſe which they have practiſed with ſo much pain. Hence they acquire oppoſite habits in their manners, and there is a continual ſtruggle between theſe. They find it impoſſible to correct inſtantaneouſly the awkward tricks which they have acquired, and they learn *ineffectually* to attempt a conqueſt over themſelves; or elſe, which is moſt commonly the cataſtrophe, they learn to hear the exhortations and rebukes of all around them, without being ſtimulated to any degree of exertion *. The ſame voices which loſe their power on theſe trifling occaſions, loſe at the ſame time much of their general influence. More *power* is waſted upon trifling defects in the manners of children, than can be imagined by any who have not particularly attended to this ſubject. If it be thought indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſpeak to children eternally about their manners, this irritating and diſagreeable office ſhould devolve upon ſomebody whoſe influence over the children we are not anxious to preſerve undiminiſhed. A little ingenuity in contriving the dreſs, writing deſks, reading deſks, &c. of children who are any way defective in their ſhape, might ſpare much of the anxiety which is felt by their parents, and much of the bodily and mental pain which they alternately endure themſelves. For theſe patients would it not be rather more ſafe to conſult the philoſophic phyſician †, than the dancing maſter who is not bound to underſtand either anatomy or metaphyſics?

* See the judicious Locke's obſervations upon the ſubject of *manners*, § 67 of his valuable Treatiſe on Education.

† See vol. ii. of Zoonomia.

Every preventative which is diſcovered for any defect, either in manners, temper, or underſtanding, diminiſhes the neceſſity for puniſhment: puniſhments are *the abrupt, brutal reſource of ignorance, frequently* *, to cure the effects of former negligence. With children who have been reaſonably and affectionately educated, ſcarcely any puniſhments are requiſite. This is not an aſſertion hazarded without experience; the happy experience of ſeveral years, and of ſeveral children of different ages and tempers, juſtifies this aſſertion. As for corporal puniſhments, they may be neceſſary where boys are to be *drilled* in a given time into ſcholars; but the language of blows need ſeldom be uſed to reaſonable creatures. The idea that it is diſgraceful to be governed by force ſhould be kept alive in the minds of children; the dread of ſhame is a more powerful motive than the fear of bodily pain. To prove the truth of this, we may recollect that few people have ever been known to deſtroy themſelves in order to eſcape from bodily pain; but numbers, to avoid ſhame, have put an end to their exiſtence. It has been a queſtion, whether mankind are moſt governed by hope or by fear, by rewards or by puniſhments. This queſtion, like many others which have occaſioned tedious debates, turns chiefly upon words. Hope and fear are ſometimes uſed to denote mixed and ſometimes unmixed paſſions. Thoſe who ſpeak of them as unmixed paſſions, cannot have accurately examined their own feelings †. The probability of good produces hope; the probability of evil excites fear; and as this probability appears leſs or greater, more remote or nearer to us, the mind fluctuates between the oppoſite paſſions. When the probability increaſes on either ſide,

* We believe this is Williams's idea.

† Hume's Diſſertation on the Paſſions.

ſo does the correſponding paſſion. Since theſe paſſions ſeldom exiſt in abſolute ſeparation from one another, it appears that we cannot philoſophically ſpeak of either as an independent motive: to the queſtion therefore, "which governs mankind the moſt, "hope or fear?" we cannot give an explicit anſwer.

When we would determine upon the probability of any good or evil, we are inſenſibly influenced, not only by the view of the circumſtances before us, but alſo by our previous habits; we judge not only by the general laws of human events, but alſo by our own individual experience. If we have been uſually ſucceſsful, we are inclined to hope; have we been accuſtomed to misfortunes, we are hence diſpoſed to fear. "Cæſar and his fortune are on "board," exclaimed the confident hero to the mariners. Hope excites the mind to exertion; fear repreſſes all activity. As a preventative from vice you may employ fear; to reſtrain the exceſſes of all the furious paſſions it is uſeful and neceſſary: but would you rouſe the energies of virtue, you muſt inſpire and invigorate the ſoul with hope. Courage, generoſity, induſtry, perſeverance, all the magic of talents, all the powers of genius, all the virtues that appear ſpontaneous in great minds, ſpring from hope. But how different is the hope of a great and of a little mind; not only are the objects of this hope different, but the paſſion itſelf is raiſed and ſupported in a different manner. A feeble perſon, if he preſumes to hope, hopes as ſuperſtitiouſly as he fears; he keeps his attention ſeduloufly fixed upon all the probabilities in his favour; he will not liſten to any arguments in oppoſition to his wiſhes; he knows he is unreaſonable, he perſiſts in continuing ſo; he does not connect any idea of exertion with hope; his hope uſually reſts upon the exertions of others, or upon ſome fortuitous circumſtances. A man of

a ſtrong

a ſtrong mind reaſons before he hopes, he takes in at one quick comprehenſive glance all that is to be ſeen both for and againſt him; he is from experience diſpoſed to depend much upon his own exertions, if they can turn the balance in his favour; he hopes, he acts, he ſucceeds. Poets in all ages have celebrated the charms of hope; without her propitious influence, life, they tell us, would be worſe than death; without her ſmiles nature would ſmile in vain; without her promiſes, treacherous though they often prove, reality would have nothing to give worthy of our acceptance. We are not bound, however, to underſtand literally the rhetoric of poets. Hope is to them a beautiful and uſeful allegorical perſonage: ſometimes leaning upon an anchor; ſometimes "waving her golden hair;" always young, ſmiling, enchanting, furniſhed with a rich aſſortment of epithets ſuited to the ode, the ſonnet, the madrigal, with a traditionary number of images and alluſions; what more can a poet deſire? Men, except when they are poets, do not value hope as the firſt of terreſtrial bleſſings. The action and energies which hope produces, are to many more agreeable than the paſſion itſelf; that feveriſh ſtate of ſuſpenſe which prevents ſettled thought or vigorous exertion, far from being agreeable, is highly painful to a well regulated mind; the continued repetition of the ſame ideas and the ſame calculations fatigues the mind, which in reaſoning has been accuſtomed to arrive at ſome certain concluſion, or to advance at leaſt a ſtep at every effort. The exerciſe of the mind in changing the views of its object, which is ſuppoſed to be a great part of the pleaſure of hope, is ſoon over to an active imagination, which quickly runs through all the poſſible changes; or is this exerciſe, even while it laſts, ſo delightful to a man who has a variety of intellectual occupations, as it frequently appears to him who knows

knows ſcarcely any other ſpecies of mental activity. The vacillating ſtate of mind, peculiar to hope and fear, is by no means favourable to induſtry; half our time is generally conſumed in ſpeculating upon the reward, inſtead of earning it, whenever the value of that reward is not *preciſely aſcertainable*. In all occupations where judgment or accurate obſervation is eſſential, if the reward of our labour is brought ſuddenly to excite our hope, there is an immediate interruption of all effectual labour; the thoughts take a new direction, the mind becomes tremulous, and nothing deciſive can be done, till the emotions of hope and fear either ſubſide or are vanquiſhed.

M. l'Abbé Chappe, who was ſent by the king of France, at the deſire of the French Academy, to Siberia, to obſerve the tranſit of Venus, gives us a ſtriking picture of the ſtate of his own mind when the moment of this famous obſervation approached. In the deſcription of his own feelings this traveller may be admitted as good authority. A few hours before the obſervation, a black cloud appeared in the ſky; the idea of returning to Paris, after ſuch a long and perilous journey, without having ſeen the tranſit of Venus; the idea of the diſappointment to his king, to his country, to all the philoſophers in Europe; threw him into a ſtate of agitation, "which muſt have been felt to be conceived." At length the black cloud vaniſhed; his hopes affected him almoſt as much as his fears had done; he fixed his teleſcope, ſaw the planet; his eye wandered over the immenſe ſpace a thouſand times in a minute; his ſecretary ſtood on one ſide with his pen in his hand; his aſſiſtant, with his eye fixed upon the watch, was ſtationed on the other ſide. The moment of the total immerſion arrived, the agitated philoſopher was ſeized with an univerſal ſhivering, and could

ſcarcely

ſcarcely command his thoughts ſufficiently to ſecure the obſervation.

The uncertainty of reward, and the conſequent agitations of hope and fear, operate as unfavourably upon the moral as upon the intellectual character. The favour of princes is an uncertain reward; courtiers are uſually deſpicable and wretched beings; they live upon hope, but their hope is not connected with exertion. Thoſe who court popularity are not leſs deſpicable or leſs wretched; their reward is uncertain: what is more uncertain than the affection of the multitude? The Proteus character of Wharton, ſo admirably drawn by Pope, is a ſtriking picture of a man who has laboured through life with the vague *hope* of obtaining univerſal applauſe.

Let us ſuppoſe a child to be educated by a variety of perſons, all differing in their taſtes and tempers, and in their notions of right and wrong; all having the power to reward and puniſh their common pupil. What muſt this pupil become? A mixture of incongruous characters; ſuperſtitious, enthuſiaſtic, indolent, and perhaps profligate: ſuperſtitious, becauſe his own contradictory experience would expoſe him to fear without reaſon; enthuſiaſtic, becauſe he would from the ſame cauſe form abſurd expectations; indolent, becauſe the *will* of others has been the meaſure of his happineſs, and his own exertions have never procured him any certain reward; profligate, becauſe, probably from the confuſed variety of his moral leſſons, he has at laſt concluded that right and wrong are but unmeaning words. Let us change the deſtiny of this child, by changing his education. Place him under the ſole care of a perſon of an enlarged capacity, and a ſteady mind; who has formed juſt notions of right and wrong; and who in the diſ-

tribution of reward and punishment, of praise and blame, will be prompt, exact, invariable. His pupil will neither be credulous, rash, nor profligate; and he certainly will not be indolent; his habitual and his rational belief will in all circumstances agree with each other; his hope will be the prelude to exertion, and his fear will restrain him only in situations where action is dangerous.

Even amongst children, we must frequently have observed a prodigious difference in the quantity of hope and fear which is felt by those who have been well or ill educated. An ill educated child is in daily, hourly, alternate agonies of hope and fear; the present never occupies or interests him, but his soul is intent upon some future gratification, which never pays him by its full possession. As soon as he awakens in the morning, he recollects some promised blessing, and till the happy moment arrives, he is wretched in impatience: at breakfast he is to be blessed with some toy, that he is to have the moment breakfast is finished; and when he finds the toy does not delight him, he is *to be blessed* with a sweet pudding at dinner, or with sitting up half an hour later at night than his usual bed-time. Endeavour to find some occupation that shall amuse him, you will not easily succeed, for he will still anticipate what you are going to say or to do. "What will come "next?" "What shall we do after this?" are, as Mr. Williams, in his able lectures upon education, observes, the questions incessantly asked by spoiled children. This species of idle, restless curiosity, does not lead to the acquisition of knowledge, it prevents the possibility of instruction; it is not the animation of a healthy mind, it is the debility of an over-stimulated temper. There is a very sensible letter in Mrs. Macaulay's book upon education, on

the

the impropriety of filling the imagination of young people with proſpects of future enjoyment: the fooliſh ſyſtem of promiſing great rewards, and fine preſents, ſhe clearly ſhews creates habitual diſorders in the minds of children.

The happineſs of life depends more upon a ſucceſſion of ſmall enjoyments, than upon great pleaſures; and thoſe who become incapable of taſting the moderately agreeable ſenſations, cannot fill up the intervals of their exiſtence between their great delights. The happineſs of childhood peculiarly depends upon their enjoyment of *little* pleaſures: of theſe they have a continual variety; they have perpetual occupation for their ſenſes, in obſerving all the objects around them, and all their faculties may be exerciſed upon ſuitable ſubjects. The pleaſure of this exerciſe is in itſelf ſufficient: we need not ſay to a child, "Look at the wings of "this beautiful butterfly, and I will give you a piece of plum-"cake; obſerve how the butterfly curls his proboſcis, how he "dives into the honeyed flowers, and I will take you in a coach "to pay a viſit with me, my dear. Remember the pretty ſtory "you read this morning, and you ſhall have a new coat." Without the new coat, or the viſit, or the plum-cake, the child would have had ſufficient amuſement in the ſtory and the ſight of the butterfly's proboſcis: the rewards, beſides, have no natural connexion with the things themſelves; and they create, where they are moſt liked, a taſte for factitious pleaſures. Would you encourage benevolence, generoſity, or prudence, let each have its appropriate reward of affection, eſteem, and confidence *; but do not by ill judged bounties attempt to force theſe virtues into pre-

* See Locke, and an excellent little eſſay of Madame de Lambert's.

mature diſplay. The rewards which are given to benevolence and generoſity in children frequently encourage ſelfiſhneſs, and ſometimes teach them cunning. Lord Kames tells us a ſtory, which is preciſely a caſe in point. Two boys, the ſons of the earl of Elgin, were permitted by their father to aſſociate with the poor boys in the neighbourhood of his father's houſe. One day, the earl's ſons being called to dinner, a lad who was playing with them, ſaid that he would wait till they returned; "There is no "dinner for me at home," ſaid the poor boy. "Come with us "then," ſaid the earl's ſons. The boy refuſed, and when they aſked him if he had any money to buy a dinner, he anſwered, "No." "Papa," ſaid the eldeſt of the young gentlemen when he got home, "what was the price of the ſilver buckles you gave "me?" "Five ſhillings." "Let me have the money, and I'll give "you the buckles." It was done accordingly, ſays Lord Kames. The earl, inquiring privately, found that the money was given to the lad *who had no dinner*. The buckles were returned, and the boy was highly commended for being kind to his companion. The commendations were juſt, but the buckles ſhould not have been returned: the boy ſhould have been ſuffered ſteadily to abide by his own bargain; he ſhould have been let feel the pleaſure, and pay the exact price of his own generoſity.

If we attempt to teach children that they can be generous, without giving up ſome of their own pleaſures for the ſake of other people, we attempt to teach them what is falſe. If we once make them amends for any ſacrifice they have made, we lead them to expect the ſame remuneration upon a future occaſion; and then, in fact, they act with a direct view to their own intereſt, and govern

govern themſelves by the calculations of prudence, inſtead of following the dictates of benevolence. It is true, that if we ſpeak with accuracy, we muſt admit, that the moſt benevolent and generous perſons act from the hope of receiving pleaſure, and their enjoyment is more exquiſite than that of the moſt refined ſelfiſhneſs; in the language of M. de Rochefoucault, we ſhould be therefore forced to acknowledge, that the moſt benevolent is always the moſt ſelfiſh perſon. This ſeeming paradox is anſwered, by obſerving, that the epithet *ſelfiſh* is given to thoſe who prefer pleaſures in which other people have no ſhare; we change the meaning of words when we talk of its being ſelfiſh to like the pleaſures of ſympathy or benevolence, becauſe theſe pleaſures cannot be confined ſolely to the idea of ſelf. When we ſay that a perſon purſues his own intereſt more by being generous than by being covetous, we take into the account the general ſum of his agreeable feelings, we do not balance prudentially his loſs or gain upon particular occaſions. The generous man may himſelf be convinced, that the ſum of his happineſs is more increaſed by the feelings of benevolence, than it could be by the gratification of avarice; but, though his underſtanding may perceive the demonſtration of this moral theorem, though it is the remote principle of his whole conduct, it does not occur to his memory in the form of a prudential aphoriſm, whenever he is going to do a generous action. It is eſſential to our ideas of generoſity, that no ſuch reaſoning ſhould at that moment paſs in his mind; we know that the feelings of generoſity are aſſociated with a number of enthuſiaſtic ideas; we can ſympathiſe with the virtuous inſanity of the man who forgets himſelf whilſt he thinks of others; we do not ſo readily ſympathiſe with the cold ſtrength of mind of the perſon, who, deliberate-

ly

ly preferring *the greateſt poſſible ſhare of happineſs*, is benevolent by rule and meaſure.

Whether we are juſt or not, in refuſing our ſympathy to the man of reaſon, and in giving our ſpontaneous approbation to the man of enthuſiaſm, we ſhall not here examine. But the reaſonable man, who has been convinced of this propenſity in human nature, will take it into his calculations; he will perceive, that he loſes, in loſing the pleaſure of ſympathy, part of the ſum total of his poſſible happineſs; he will conſequently wiſh, that he could add this item of pleaſure to the credit ſide of his account. This, however, he cannot accompliſh, becauſe, though he can by reaſon correct his calculations, it is not in the power, even of the moſt potent reaſon, ſuddenly to break habitual aſſociations; much leſs is it in the power of cool reaſon to conjure up warm enthuſiaſm. Yet in this caſe enthuſiaſm *is the thing required.*

What the man of reaſon cannot do for himſelf after his aſſociations are ſtrongly formed, might have been eaſily accompliſhed in his early education. He might have been taught the ſame general principles, but with different habits: by early aſſociating the pleaſures of ſympathy, and praiſe, and affection with all generous and benevolent actions, his parents might have joined theſe ideas ſo forcibly in his mind, that the one ſet of ideas ſhould never recur without the other. Whenever the words benevolence or generoſity were pronounced, the feelings of habitual pleaſure would recur; and he would, independently of reaſon, deſire from aſſociation to be generous. When enthuſiaſm is fairly juſtified by reaſon, we have nothing to fear from her vehemence.

In

In rewarding children for the prudential virtues, ſuch as order, cleanlineſs, economy, temperance, &c. we ſhould endeavour to make the rewards the immediate conſequence of the virtues themſelves, and at the ſame time approbation ſhould be ſhewn in ſpeaking of theſe uſeful qualities. A gradation muſt however always be obſerved in our praiſes of different virtues; thoſe that are the moſt uſeful to ſociety, as truth, juſtice, and humanity, muſt ſtand the higheſt in the ſcale; thoſe that are moſt agreeable claim the next place. Thoſe good qualities, which muſt wait a conſiderable time for their reward, ſuch as perſeverance, prudence, &c. we muſt not expect early from young people. Till they have had experience, how can they form any idea about the future? till they have been punctually rewarded for their induſtry, or for their prudence, they do not feel the value of prudence and perſeverance. Time is neceſſary to all theſe leſſons, and thoſe who leave time out in their calculations, will always be diſappointed in whatever plan of education they may purſue.

Many to whom the ſubject is familiar will be fatigued, probably, by the detailed manner in which it has been thought neceſſary to explain the principles by which we ſhould guide ourſelves in the diſtribution of rewards and puniſhments to children. Thoſe who quickly ſeize, and apply general ideas, cannot endure with patience the tedious minuteneſs of didactic illuſtration. Thoſe who are actually engaged in *practical education*, will not, on the contrary, be ſatisfied with general precepts, and, however plauſible any theory may appear, they are well aware, that its utility muſt depend upon a variety of ſmall circumſtances to which writers of theories often neglect to advert. At the hazard of being thought tedious, thoſe muſt be minute in explanation who deſire to be ge-

nerally uſeful. An old French writer*, more remarkable for originality of thought, than for the graces of ſtyle, was once reproached *by a friend* with the frequent repetitions which were to be found in his works. "Name them to me," ſaid the author. The critic with obliging preciſion mentioned all the ideas which had moſt frequently recurred in the book. "I am ſatisfied," replied the honeſt author; "you remember my ideas; I repeated them ſo often "to prevent you from forgetting them. Without my repetitions "we ſhould never have ſucceeded."

* The Abbé St. Pierre. See his Éloge by D'Alembert.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER X.

ON SYMPATHY AND SENSIBILITY.

THE artleſs expreſſions of ſympathy and ſenſibility in children are peculiarly pleaſing; people who, in their commerce with the world, have been diſguſted and deceived by falſehood and affectation, liſten with delight to the genuine language of nature. Thoſe who have any intereſt in the education of children have yet a higher ſenſe of pleaſure in obſerving ſymptoms of their ſenſibility; they anticipate the future virtues which early ſenſibility ſeems certainly to promiſe; the future happineſs which theſe virtues will diffuſe. Nor are they unſupported by philoſophy in theſe ſanguine hopes. No theory was ever developed with more ingenious elegance, than that which deduces all our moral ſentiments from ſympathy. The direct influence of ſympathy upon all ſocial beings is ſufficiently obvious, and we immediately perceive its neceſſary connexion with compaſſion, friendſhip, and benevolence; but the ſubject becomes more intricate when we are to analyſe our ſenſe of propriety and juſtice; of merit and demerit; of gratitude and reſentment; ſelf-complacency or remorſe; ambition and ſhame *.

* Adam Smith.

We allow, without hesitation, that a being destitute of sympathy could never have any of these feelings, and must consequently be incapable of all intercourse with society; yet we must at the same time perceive, that a being endowed with the most exquisite sympathy must, without the assistance and education of reason, be, if not equally incapable of social intercourse, far more dangerous to the happiness of society. A person governed by sympathy alone must be influenced by the bad as well as by the good passions of others; he must feel resentment with the angry man; hatred with the malevolent; jealousy with the jealous; and avarice with the miser: the more lively his sympathy with these painful feelings, the greater must be his misery; the more forcibly he is impelled to action by this sympathetic influence, the greater, probably, must be his imprudence and his guilt. Let us even suppose a being capable of sympathy only with the best feelings of his fellow-creatures, still, without the direction of reason, he would be a nuisance in the world; his pity would stop the hand, and overturn the balance of justice; his love would be as dangerous as his pity; his gratitude would exalt his benefactor at the expence of the whole human race; his sympathy with the rich, the prosperous, the great, and the fortunate, would be so sudden, and so violent, as to leave him no time for reflection upon the consequences of tyranny, or the miseries occasioned by monopoly. No time for reflection, did we say? We forgot that we were speaking of a being destitute of the reasoning faculty! Such a being, no matter what his virtuous sympathies might be, must act either like a madman or a fool. On sympathy we cannot depend either for the correctness of a man's moral sentiments, or for the steadiness of his moral conduct. It is very common to talk of the excellence of a person's heart, of the natural goodness of his disposition; when these ex-

pressions

preſſions diſtinctly mean any thing, they muſt refer to natural ſympathy, or a ſuperior degree of ſenſibility. Experience, however, does not teach us, that ſenſibility and virtue have any certain connexion with each other. No one can read the works of Sterne, or of Rouſſeau, without believing theſe men to have been endowed with extraordinary ſenſibility; yet who would propoſe their conduct in life as a model for imitation? That quickneſs of ſympathy with preſent objects of diſtreſs, which conſtitutes compaſſion, is uſually thought a virtue, but it is a virtue frequently found in perſons of abandoned character. Mandeville, in his eſſay upon Charity Schools, puts this in a ſtrong light.

"Should any one of us," ſays he, "be locked up in a ground "room, where in a yard joining to it there was a thriving good-"humoured child at play, of two or three years old, ſo near us "that through the grates of the window we could almoſt touch "it with our hands; and if, whilſt we took delight in the harm-"leſs diverſion, and imperfect prattle, of the innocent babe, a "naſty overgrown ſow ſhould come in upon the child, ſet it a "ſcreaming, and frighten it out of its wits; it is natural to think "that this would make us uneaſy, and that with crying out, and "making all the menacing noiſe we could, we ſhould endeavour "to drive the ſow away. But if this ſhould happen to be an half-"ſtarved creature, that, mad with hunger, went roaming about "in queſt of food, and we ſhould behold the ravenous brute, in "ſpite of our cries, and all the threatening geſtures we could think "of, actually lay hold of the helpleſs infant, deſtroy, and devour "it;—to ſee her widely open her deſtructive jaws, and the poor "lamb beat down with greedy haſte; to look on the defenceleſs "poſture of tender limbs firſt trampled upon, then torn aſunder;

" to ſee the filthy ſnout digging in the yet living entrails, ſuck up
" the ſmoaking blood, and now and then to hear the crackling of
" the bones, and the cruel animal grunt with ſavage pleaſure over
" the horrid banquet; to hear and ſee all this what torture would
" it give the ſoul beyond expreſſion! * * * * * * * * * * * *
" Not only a man of humanity, of good morals, and commiſera-
" tion, but likewiſe an highwayman, an houſebreaker, or a mur-
" derer, could feel anxieties on ſuch an occaſion."

Amongſt thoſe monſters, who are pointed out by the hiſtorian to the juſt deteſtation of all mankind, we meet with inſtances of caſual ſympathy and ſenſibility; even their vices frequently prove to us, that they never became utterly indifferent to the opinion and feelings of their fellow-creatures. The diſſimulation, jealouſy, ſuſpicion, and cruelty of Tiberius, originated perhaps more in his anxiety about the opinons which were formed of his character, than in his fears of any conſpiracies againſt his life. The "*judge "within,*" *the habit of viewing his own conduct in the light in which it was beheld by the impartial ſpectator*, prompted him to new crimes; and thus his unextinguiſhed ſympathy, and his exaſperated ſenſibility, drove him to exceſſes, from which a more torpid temperament might have preſerved him *. When, upon his preſenting the ſons of Germanicus to the ſenate, Tiberius beheld the tenderneſs with which theſe young men were received, he was moved to ſuch an agony of jealouſy as inſtantly to beſeech the ſenate that he might reſign the empire. We cannot attribute either to policy, or fear, this ſtrong emotion, becauſe we know that the ſenate was at this time abſolutely at the diſpoſal of Tiberius, and

* See Smith.

the

the lives of the ſons of Germanicus depended upon his pleaſure.

The deſire to excel, according to "Smith's Theory of Moral "Sentiments," is to be reſolved principally into our love of the ſympathy of our fellow-creatures. We wiſh for their ſympathy, either in our ſucceſs, or in the pleaſure we feel in ſuperiority. The deſire for this refined modification of ſympathy may be the motive of good and great actions, but it cannot be truſted as a moral principle. Nero's love of ſympathy made him anxious to be applauded on the ſtage as a fiddler and a buffoon. Tiberius baniſhed one of his philoſophic courtiers, and perſecuted him till the unfortunate man laid violent hands upon himſelf, merely becauſe he had diſcovered that the emperor read books in the morning to prepare himſelf with queſtions for his literary ſociety at night. Dionyſius, the tyrant of Syracuſe, ſued in the moſt abject manner for an Olympic crown, and ſent a critic to the gallies for finding fault with his verſes. Had not theſe men a ſufficient degree of ſenſibility to praiſe, and more than a ſufficent deſire for the ſympathy of their fellow-creatures?

It is not from any perverſe love of ſophiſtry that the word ſenſibility has been uſed in theſe inſtances inſtead of *irritability*, which ſeems better to characterize the temper of a Dionyſius, or a Tiberius; but in fact irritability, in common language, merely denotes an exceſſive or ill-governed degree of ſenſibility. The point of exceſs muſt be marked: ſympathy muſt be regulated by education, and conſequently the methods of directing ſenſibility to uſeful and amiable purpoſes muſt be anxiouſly ſtudied, by all who wiſh either for the happineſs or virtue of their pupils.

Long

Long before children can underſtand reaſoning, they can feel ſympathy; during this early period of their education, example and habit, ſlight external circumſtances, and the propenſity to imitation, govern their thoughts and actions. Imitation is the involuntary effect of ſympathy in children, hence thoſe who have the moſt ſympathy are moſt liable to be improved or injured by early examples. Examples of the malevolent paſſions ſhould therefore be moſt carefully excluded from the ſight of thoſe who have yet no choice in their ſympathy; expreſſions of kindneſs and affection in the countenance, the voice, the actions, of all who approach, and of all who have the care of infants, are not only immediately and evidently agreeable to the children, but ought alſo to be uſed as the beſt poſſible means of exciting benevolent ſympathies in their mind. Children, who habitually meet with kindneſs, habitually feel complacency; that ſpecies of inſtinctive, or rather of aſſociated affection, which always riſes in the mind from the recollection of paſt pleaſures, is immediately excited in ſuch children by the ſight of their parents. By an eaſy tranſition of ideas they expect the ſame benevolence, even from ſtrangers, which they have experienced from their friends, and their ſympathy naturally prepares them to wiſh for ſociety; this wiſh is often improperly indulged.

At the age when children begin to unfold their ideas, and to expreſs their thoughts in words, they are ſuch intereſting and entertaining companions, that they attract a large portion of our daily attention: we liſten eagerly to their ſimple obſervations; we enter into their young aſtoniſhment at every new object; we are delighted to watch all their emotions; we help them with words to expreſs their ideas; we anxiouſly endeavour to underſtand their

imperfect reaſonings, and are pleaſed to find, or put them in the right. This ſeaſon of univerſal ſmiles and courteſy is delightful to children whilſt it laſts, but it ſoon paſſes away; they ſoon ſpeak without exciting any aſtoniſhment, and inſtead of meeting with admiration for every attempt to expreſs an idea, they ſoon are repulſed for troubleſome volubility; even when they talk ſenſe, they are ſuffered to talk unheard, or elſe they are checked for unbecoming preſumption. Children feel this change in public opinion and manners moſt ſeverely; they are not ſenſible of any change in themſelves, except, perhaps, they are conſcious of having improved both in ſenſe and language. This unmerited loſs of their late gratuitous allowance of ſympathy uſually operates unfavourably upon the temper of the ſufferers; they become ſhy and ſilent, and reſerved, if not ſullen; they withdraw from our capricious ſociety, and they endeavour to conſole themſelves with other pleaſures. It is difficult to them to feel contented with their own little occupations and amuſements, for want of the ſpectators and the audience which uſed to be at their command. Children of a timid temper, or of an indolent diſpoſition, are quite diſpirited and bereft of all energy in theſe circumſtances; others, with greater vivacity, and more voluntary exertion, endeavour to ſupply the loſs of univerſal ſympathy by the invention of independent occupations; but they feel anger and indignation, when they are not rewarded with any ſmiles or any praiſe for their "virtuous toil." They naturally ſeek for new companions, either amongſt children of their own age, or amongſt complaiſant ſervants. Immediately all the buſineſs of education is at a ſtand, for neither theſe ſervants, nor theſe playfellows, are capable of becoming their inſtructors; nor can tutors hope to ſucceed, who have transferred their power over the pleaſures, and conſequently over the affections, of their

their pupils. Sympathy now becomes the declared enemy of all the conſtituted authorities. What chance is there of obedience or of happineſs, under ſuch a government?

Would it not be more prudent to prevent, than to complain, of theſe evils? Sympathy is our firſt, beſt friend, in education, and by judicious management might long continue our faithful ally.

Inſtead of laviſhing our ſmiles and our attention upon young children for a ſhort period juſt at that age when they are amuſing playthings, ſhould not we do more wiſely if we reſerved ſome portion of our kindneſs a few years longer? By a proper *economy* our ſympathy may laſt for many years, and may continually contribute to the moſt uſeful purpoſes. Inſtead of accuſtoming our pupils early to ſuch a degree of our attention as cannot be ſupported long on our parts, we ſhould rather ſuffer them to feel a little ennui at that age, when they can have but few independent or uſeful occupations. We ſhould employ ourſelves in our uſual manner, and converſe, without allowing children to interrupt us with frivolous prattle; but whenever they aſk ſenſible queſtions, make juſt obſervations, or ſhew a diſpoſition to acquire knowledge, we ſhould aſſiſt and encourage them with praiſe and affection; gradually as they become capable of taking any part in converſation, they ſhould be admitted into ſociety, and they will learn of themſelves, or we may teach them, that uſeful and agreeable qualities are thoſe by which they muſt ſecure the pleaſures of ſympathy. Eſteem, being aſſociated with ſympathy, will increaſe its value, and this connexion ſhould be made as ſoon, and kept as ſacred, in the mind as poſſible.

With

With reſpect to the ſympathy which children feel for each other, it muſt be carefully managed, or it will counteract, inſtead of aſſiſting us, in education. It is natural that thoſe who are placed nearly in the ſame circumſtances ſhould feel alike, and ſympathiſe with one another; but children feel only for the preſent, they have few ideas of the future, and conſequently all that they can deſire, either for themſelves, or for their companions, is what will *immediately* pleaſe. Education looks to the future, and frequently we muſt enſure future advantage, even at the expence of preſent pain or reſtraint. The companion and the tutor then, ſuppoſing each to be equally good and equally kind, muſt command in a very different degree the ſympathy of the child. It may, notwithſtanding, be queſtioned whether thoſe who are conſtant companions in their idle hours, when they are *very* young, are likely to be either as fond of one another when they grow up, or even as happy whilſt they are children, as thoſe are who ſpend leſs time together. Whenever the humours, intereſts, and paſſions, of others croſs our own, there is an end of ſympathy, and this happens almoſt every hour in the day with children; it is generally ſuppoſed that they learn to live in friendſhip with each other, and to bear with one another's little faults habitually, that they even reciprocally cure theſe faults, and learn, by early experience, thoſe principles of honour and juſtice on which ſociety depends. We may be deceived in this reaſoning by a falſe analogy.

We call the ſociety of children *ſociety in miniature*; the proportions of the miniature are ſo much altered, that it is by no means an accurate reſemblance of that which exiſts in the *civilized* world. Amongſt children of different ages, ſtrength, and talents, there

muſt always be tyranny, injuſtice, and that worſt ſpecies of inequality, which ariſes from ſuperior force on the one ſide, and abject timidity on the other. Of this the ſpectators of juvenile diſputes and quarrels are ſometimes ſenſible, and they haſtily interfere and endeavour to part the combatants, by pronouncing certain moral ſentences, ſuch as, "Good boys never quarrel; brothers muſt love and help one another." But theſe ſentences ſeldom operate as a charm upon the angry paſſions; the parties concerned hearing it aſſerted that they muſt love one another, at the very inſtant when they happen to feel that they cannot, are ſtill farther exaſperated, and they ſtand at bay, ſullen in hatred, or approach hypocritical in reconciliation. It is more eaſy to prevent occaſions of diſpute, than to remedy the bad conſequences which petty altercations produce. Young children ſhould be kept aſunder at all times, and in all ſituations, in which it is neceſſary, or probable, that their appetites and paſſions ſhould be in direct competition. Two hungry children, with their eager eyes fixed upon one and the ſame baſon of bread and milk, do not ſympathiſe with each other, though they have the ſame ſenſations; each perceives, that if the other eats the bread and milk, he cannot eat it. Hunger is more powerful than ſympathy; but ſatisfy the hunger of one of the parties, and immediately he will begin to feel for his companion, and will wiſh that *his* hunger ſhould alſo be ſatisfied. Even Mr. Barnet, the epicure, who is ſo well deſcribed in Moore's excellent novel *, *after* he has crammed himſelf to the throat, aſks his wife to "try to eat "a bit." Intelligent preceptors will apply the inſtance of the baſon of bread and milk in a variety of apparently diſſimilar circumſtances.

* Edward.

We

We may obſerve, that the more quickly children reaſon, the ſooner they diſcover how far their intereſts are any ways incompatible with the intereſts of their companions. The more readily a boy calculates, the ſooner he would perceive, that if he were to ſhare his baſon of bread and milk equally with a dozen of his companions, his own portion muſt be ſmall. The accuracy of his mental diviſion would prevent him from offering to part with that ſhare which, perhaps, a more ignorant accountant would be ready to ſurrender at once, without being on that account more generous. Children, who are accurate obſervers of the countenance, and who have a ſuperior degree of penetration, diſcover very early the ſymptoms of diſpleaſure, or of affection, in their friends; they alſo perceive quickly the dangers of rivalſhip from their companions. If experience convinces them, that they muſt loſe in proportion as their companions gain, either in fame, or in favour, they will neceſſarily diſlike them as rivals; their hatred will be as vehement, as their love of praiſe and affection is ardent. Thus children, who have the moſt lively ſympathy, are, unleſs they be judiciouſly educated, the moſt in danger of feeling early the malevolent paſſions of jealouſy and envy. It is inhuman, and in every point of view unjuſtifiable in us, to excite theſe painful feelings in children, as we too often do, by the careleſs or partial diſtribution of affection and applauſe. Exact juſtice will beſt prevent jealouſy; each individual ſubmits to juſtice, becauſe each, in turn, feels the benefit of its protection. Some preceptors, with benevolent intentions, labour to preſerve a perfect equality amongſt their pupils, and from the fear of exciting envy in thoſe who are inferior, avoid uttering any encomiums upon ſuperior talents and merit. This management ſeldom ſucceeds; the truth cannot be concealed; thoſe who feel their own ſuperiority make painful reflections upon

the injuſtice done to them by the policy of their tutors; thoſe who are ſenſible of their own inferiority are not comforted, by the courteſy and humiliating forbearance with which they are treated. It is therefore beſt to ſpeak the plain truth; to give to all their due ſhare of affection and applauſe: at the ſame time we ſhould avoid blaming one child at the moment when we praiſe another; we ſhould never put our pupils in contraſt with one another, or yet ſhould we deceive them as to their reſpective excellencies and defects. Our compariſon ſhould rather be made between what the pupil *has been*, and what he *is*, than between what he *is*, and what any body elſe *is not* *. By this ſtyle of praiſe we may induce children to become emulous of their former ſelves, inſtead of being envious of their competitors. Without deceit or affectation, we may alſo take care to aſſociate general pleaſure in a family with particular commendations; thus if one boy is remarkable for prudence, and another for generoſity, we ſhould not praiſe the generoſity of the one at the expence of the prudence of the other, but we ſhould give to each virtue its juſt meaſure of applauſe. If one girl ſings, and another draws, remarkably well, we may ſhow that we are pleaſed with both agreeable accompliſhments, without bringing them into compariſon. Nor is it neceſſary that we ſhould be in a deſperate hurry to balance the ſeparate degrees of praiſe which we diſtribute exactly at the ſame moment, becauſe if children are ſure that the reward of their induſtry and ingenuity is ſecured by our juſtice, they will truſt to us, though that reward may be for a few hours delayed. It is only where workmen have no confidence in the integrity or punctuality of their maſters, that

* V. Rouſſeau and Williams.

they

they are impatient of any accidental delay in the payment of their wages.

With the precautions which have been mentioned we may hope to ſee children grow up in real friendſhip together. The whole ſum of their pleaſure is much increaſed by mutual ſympathy. This happy moral truth, upon which ſo many of our virtues depend, ſhould be impreſſed upon the mind; it ſhould be clearly demonſtrated to the reaſon; it ſhould not be repeated as an a priori, ſentimental aſſertion.

Thoſe who have obſerved the ſudden, violent, and ſurpriſing effects of emulation in public ſchools, will regret the want of this *power* in the intellectual education of their pupils at home. Even the acquiſition of talents and knowledge ought, however, to be but a ſecondary conſideration, ſubordinate to the general happineſs of our pupils. If we *could* have ſuperior knowledge, upon condition that we ſhould have a malevolent diſpoſition, and an irritable temper, ſhould we, ſetting every other moral conſideration aſide, be willing to make the purchaſe at ſuch a price? Let any perſon, deſirous to ſee a ſtriking picture of the effects of ſcholaſtic competition upon the moral character, look at the life of that wonder of his age the celebrated Abeillard. As the taſte and manners of the preſent times are ſo different from thoſe of the age in which he lived, we ſee, without any ſpecies of deception, the real value of the learning in which he excelled, and we can judge both of his acquirements, and of his character, without prejudice. We ſee him goaded on by rivalſhip, and literary ambition, to aſtoniſhing exertions at one time, at another torpid in monkiſh indolence; at one time we ſee him intoxicated with adulation, at another liſtleſs,

leſs, deſponding, abject, incapable of maintaining his own ſelf-approbation without the ſuffrages of thoſe whom he deſpiſed. If his biographer* does him juſtice, a more ſelfiſh, irritable, contemptible, miſerable being, than the learned Abeillard could ſcarcely exiſt.

A philoſopher†, who, if we might judge of him by the benignity of his writings, was ſurely of a moſt amiable and happy temper, has yet left us a melancholy and diſcouraging hiſtory of the unſociable condition of men of ſuperior knowledge and abilities. He ſuppoſes that thoſe who have devoted much time to the cultivation of their underſtandings, have habitually leſs ſympathy, or leſs exerciſe for their ſympathy, than thoſe who live leſs abſtracted from the world; that conſequently "all their ſocial, and all their "public affections, loſe their natural warmth and vigour," whilſt their ſelfiſh paſſions are cheriſhed and ſtrengthened, being kept in conſtant play by literary rivalſhip. It is to be hoped that there are men of the moſt extenſive learning and genius, now living, who could, from their own experience, aſſure us that thoſe are obſolete obſervations, no longer applicable to modern human nature. At all events we, who refer ſo much to education, are hopefully of opinion, that education can prevent theſe evils, in common with *almoſt* all the other evils of life. It would be an error, fatal to all improvement, to believe that the cultivation of the underſtanding impedes the exerciſe of the ſocial affections. Obviouſly a man, who ſecludes himſelf from the world, and whoſe whole life is oc-

* Berington. See his Life of Abeillard.

† Dr. John Gregory. Comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man with thoſe of the Animal World. See vol. ii. of his Works, from page 100 to 114.

cupied with abſtract ſtudies, cannot enjoy any pleaſure from his ſocial affections; his admiration of the dead is ſo conſtant, that he has no time to feel any ſympathy with the living. An individual of this ruminating ſpecies is humorouſly delineated in Mrs. D'Arblay's Camilla. Men, who are compelled to unrelenting labour, whether by avarice, or by literary ambition, are equally to be pitied. They are not models for imitation: they ſacrifice their happineſs to ſome ſtrong paſſion or intereſt. Without this aſcetic abſtinence from the domeſtic and ſocial pleaſures of life, ſurely perſons may cultivate their underſtandings, and acquire, even by mixing with their fellow-creatures, a variety of uſeful knowledge.

An ingenious theory* ſuppoſes, that the exerciſe of any of our faculties is always attended with pleaſure, which laſts as long as that exerciſe can be continued without fatigue. This pleaſure, ariſing from the due exerciſe of our mental powers, the author of this theory maintains to be the foundation of our moſt agreeable ſentiments. If there be any truth in theſe ideas, of how many agreeable ſentiments muſt a man of ſenſe be capable! The pleaſures of ſociety muſt to him increaſe in an almoſt incalculable proportion, becauſe in converſation his faculties can never want ſubjects on which they may be amply exerciſed. The dearth of converſation, which every body may have felt in certain company, is always attended with mournful countenances, and every ſymptom of ennui Indeed, without the pleaſures of converſation, ſociety is reduced to meetings of people, who aſſemble to eat and drink, to ſhew their fine clothes, to weary and hate one another. The ſympathy of bon vivants is, it muſt be acknowledged, very lively

* Vernet's Théorie des Sentimens Agréables.

and

and ſincere towards each other; but this can laſt only during the hour of dinner, unleſs they revive, and prolong, by the powers of imagination, the memory of the feaſt. Some foreign traveller * tells us, that "every year at Naples an officer of the police goes "through the city, attended by a trumpeter, who proclaims in "all the ſquares and croſs-ways how many thouſand oxen, "calves, lambs, hogs, &c. the Neapolitans have had the ho-"nour of eating in the courſe of the year." The people all liſten with extreme attention to this proclamation, and are immoderately delighted at the huge amount.

A degree, and ſcarcely one degree, above the brute ſympathy of good eaters, is that gregarious propenſity which is ſometimes honoured with the name of ſociability. The current ſympathy, or appearance of ſympathy, which is to be found amongſt the idle and frivolous in faſhionable life, is wholly unconnected with even the idea of eſteem. It is therefore pernicious to all who partake of it; it excites to no great exertions, it rewards neither uſeful nor amiable qualities: on the contrary, it is to be obtained by vice, rather than by virtue; by folly much more readily than by wiſdom. It is the mere follower of faſhion, and of diſſipation, and it keeps thoſe in humour, and countenance, who ought to hear the voice of public reproach, and who might be rouſed by the fear of diſgrace, or the feelings of ſhame, to exertions which ſhould juſtly entitle them to the approbation and affection of honourable friends.

Young people, who are early in life content with this *convivial* ſympathy, may, in the common phraſe, become *very good*, *pleaſant*

* V. Varieties of Literature, vol. i.

companions,

companions; but there is little chance that they ſhould ever become any thing more, and there is great danger that they may be led into any degree of folly, extravagance, or vice, to which faſhion and the voice of numbers invite. It ſometimes happens, that men of ſuperior abilities have ſuch an indiſcriminate love of applauſe and ſympathy, that they reduce themſelves to the ſtandard of all their caſual companions, and vary their objects of ambition with the opinion of the ſilly people with whom they chance to aſſociate. In public life party ſpirit becomes the ruling principle of men of this character; in private life they are addicted to clubs, and aſſociations of all ſorts, in which the contagion of ſympathy has a power which the ſober influence of reaſon ſeldom ventures to correct. The waſte of talents, and the total loſs of principle to which this indiſcriminate love of ſympathy leads, ſhould warn us to guard againſt its influence by early education. The gregarious propenſity in childhood ſhould not be indulged without great precautions: unleſs their companions are well educated, we can never be reaſonably ſecure of the conduct or happineſs of our pupils: from ſympathy they catch all the wiſhes, taſtes, and ideas of thoſe with whom they aſſociate; and what is ſtill worſe, they acquire the dangerous habits of reſting upon the ſupport, and of wanting the ſtimulus of numbers. It is, ſurely, far more prudent to let children feel a little ennui from the want of occupation and of company, than to purchaſe for them the juvenile pleaſures of ſociety at the expence of their future happineſs. Childhood, as a part of our exiſtence, ought to have as great a ſhare of happineſs as it can enjoy compatibly with the advantage of the other ſeaſons of life. By this principle we ſhould be guided in all which we allow, and in all which we refuſe to children; by this

rule we may avoid unneceſſary ſeverity, and pernicious indulgence.

As young people gradually acquire knowledge, they will learn to *converſe*, and when they have the habits of converſing rationally, they will not deſire companions who can only chatter. They will prefer the company of friends, who can ſympathiſe in their occupations, to the preſence of ignorant idlers, who can fill up the void of ideas with nonſenſe and noiſe. Some people have a notion that the underſtanding and the *heart* are not to be educated at the ſame time: but the very reverſe of this is perhaps true; neither can be brought to any perfection, unleſs both are cultivated together.

We ſhould not therefore expect premature virtues. During childhood there occur but few opportunities of exerting the virtues which are recommended in books, ſuch as humanity, and generoſity.

The *humanity* of children cannot, perhaps, properly be ſaid to be exerciſed upon animals; they are frequently extremely fond of animals, but they are not always equable in their fondneſs; they ſometimes treat their favourites with that caprice which favourites are doomed to experience; this caprice degenerates into cruelty, if it is reſented by the ſufferer. We muſt not depend merely upon the natural feelings of compaſſion, as preſervatives againſt cruelty; the *inſtinctive* feelings of compaſſion are ſtrong amongſt uneducated people, yet theſe do not reſtrain them from acts of cruelty. They take delight, it has been often obſerved, in all tragical ſanguinary ſpectacles,

ſpectacles, becauſe theſe excite emotion, and relieve them from the liſtleſs ſtate in which their days uſually paſs. It is the ſame with all perſons, in all ranks of life, whoſe minds are uncultivated *. Until young people have fixed *habits* of benevolence, and a taſte for occupation, perhaps it is not prudent to truſt them with the care or protection of animals. Even when they are enthuſiaſtically fond of them, they cannot by their utmoſt ingenuity make the animals ſo happy in a ſtate of captivity, as they would be in a ſtate of liberty. They are apt to inſiſt upon doing animals good againſt their will, and they are often unjuſt in the defence of their favourites. A boy of ſeven years old once knocked down his ſiſter for fear ſhe ſhould ſqueeze his caterpillar †.

Children ſhould not be taught to confine their benevolence to thoſe animals which are thought beautiful; the fear and diſguſt which we expreſs at the ſight of certain unfortunate animals, whom we are pleaſed to call ugly and ſhocking, are obſerved by children, and theſe aſſociations lead to cruelty. If we do not prejudice our pupils by fooliſh exclamations, if they do not from ſympathy catch our abſurd antipathies, their benevolence towards the animal world will not be illiberally confined to favourite lapdogs, and ſinging birds. From aſſociation moſt people think that frogs are ugly animals. L——, a boy between five and ſix years old, once begged his mother to come out to look at a *beautiful* animal which he had juſt found; ſhe was rather ſurpriſed to find that this beautiful creature was a frog.

* Can it be true that an Engliſh nobleman, in the 18th century, won a bet by procuring a man to eat a cat alive?

† See Moore's Edward for the boy and larks, an excellent ſtory for children.

If children never ſee others torment animals, they will not think that cruelty can be an amuſement; but they may be provoked to revenge the pain which is inflicted upon them; and therefore we ſhould take care not to put children in ſituations where they are liable to be hurt or terrified by animals. Could we poſſibly expect, that Gulliver ſhould love the Brobdignagian waſp that buzzed round his cake, and prevented him from eating his breakfaſt? Could we expect that Gulliver ſhould be ever reconciled to the rat againſt whom he was obliged to draw his ſword? Many animals are to children what the waſp and rat were to Gulliver. Put bodily fear out of the caſe, it required all uncle Toby's benevolence to bear the buzzing of a gnat while he was eating his dinner. Children, even when they have no cauſe to be afraid of animals, are ſometimes in ſituations to be provoked by them; and the nice caſuiſt will find it difficult to do ſtrict juſtice upon the offended and the offenders.

October 2, 1796. S——, nine years old, took care of his brother H——'s hot-bed for ſome time, when H—— was abſent from home. He was extremely anxious about his charge; he took one of his ſiſters to look at the hot-bed, ſhewed her a hole where the mice came in, and expreſſed great hatred againſt the whole race. He the ſame day aſked his mother for a bait for the mouſe-trap. His mother refuſed to give him one, telling him that ſhe did not wiſh he ſhould learn to kill animals. How good nature ſometimes leads to the oppoſite feeling! S——'s love for his brother's cucumbers made him *imagine* and compaſs the death of the mice. Children ſhould be protected againſt animals, which we do not wiſh that they ſhould hate; if cats ſcratch them, and dogs bite them, and mice devour the fruits of their induſtry, children

dren muſt conſider theſe animals as enemies; they cannot love them, and they may learn the habit of revenge from being expoſed to their inſults and depredations. Pythagoras himſelf would have inſiſted upon his excluſive right to the vegetables on which he was to ſubſiſt, eſpecially if he had raiſed them by his own care and induſtry. Buffon *, notwithſtanding all his benevolent philoſophy, can ſcarcely ſpeak with patience of his enemies the field mice; who, when he was trying experiments upon the culture of foreſt trees, tormented him perpetually by their inſatiable love of acorns. "*I was terrified*," ſays he, "at the diſcovery of half a buſhel, "and often a whole buſhel, of acorns in each of the holes inhabit-"ed by theſe little animals; they had collected theſe acorns for "their winter proviſion." The philoſopher gave orders immediately for the erection of a great number of traps, and ſnares baited with broiled nuts; in leſs than three weeks nearly three hundred field mice were killed *or taken priſoners*. Mankind are obliged to carry on a defenſive war with the animal world. "Eat or be "eaten," ſays Doctor Darwin, is the great law of nature. It is fortunate for us that there are butchers by profeſſion in the world, and rat-catchers, and cats, otherwiſe our habits of benevolence and ſympathy would be utterly deſtroyed. Children, though they muſt perceive the neceſſity for deſtroying certain animals, need not be themſelves executioners; they ſhould not conquer the natural repugnance to the ſight of the ſtruggles of pain, and the convulſions of death; their averſion to being the cauſe of pain ſhould be preſerved both by principle and habit. Thoſe who have not been habituated to the bloody form of cruelty, can never fix their eye upon her without ſhuddering; even thoſe to whom ſhe may have

* Mem. de l'Acad. R. for the year 1742, p. 332.

in

in ſome inſtances been early familiariſed, recoil from her appearance in any ſhape to which they have not been accuſtomed. At one of the magnificent ſhows with which Pompey * entertained the Roman people for five days ſucceſſively, the populace enjoyed the death of wild beaſts; five hundred lions were killed; but, on the laſt day, when twenty elephants were put to death, the people, unuſed to the ſight, and moved by the lamentable howlings of theſe animals, were ſeized with ſudden compaſſion; they execrated Pompey himſelf for being the author of ſo much cruelty.

Charity to the poor is often inculcated in books for children; but how is this virtue to be actually brought into practice in childhood? Without proper objects of charity are ſelected by the parents, children have no opportunities of diſcovering them; they have not ſufficient knowledge of the world to diſtinguiſh truth from falſehood in the complaints of the diſtreſſed; or have they ſufficiently enlarged views to diſcern the beſt means of doing good to their fellow creatures. They may give away money to the poor, but they do not always feel the value of what they give: they give counters; ſupplied with all the neceſſaries and luxuries of life, they have no uſe for money, they feel no privation, they make no ſacrifice in giving money away, or at leaſt none worthy to be extolled as heroic. When children grow up they learn the value of money, their generoſity will then coſt them rather more effort, and yet can be rewarded only with the ſame expreſſions of gratitude, with the ſame bleſſings from the beggar, or the ſame applauſe from the ſpectator.

* V. Middleton's Life of Cicero, vol. i. page 474.

Let

Let us put charity out of the queſtion, and ſuppoſe that the generoſity of children is diſplayed in making preſents to their companions, ſtill there are difficulties. Theſe preſents are uſually baubles, which at the beſt can encourage only a frivolous taſte. But we muſt further conſider, that even generous children are apt to expect generoſity equal to their own from their companions; then come tacit or explicit compariſons of the value or elegance of their reſpective gifts; the difficult rules of exchange and barter are to be learned; and nice calculations of *Tare and Tret* are entered into by the repentant borrowers and lenders. A ſentimental, too often ends in a commercial intercourſe; and thoſe who begin with the moſt munificent diſpoſitions, ſometimes end with ſelfiſh diſcontent, low cunning, or diſguſting oſtentation. Whoever has carefully attended to young makers of preſents, and makers of bargains, will not think this account of them much exaggerated.

" Then what is to be done? How are the ſocial affections to be " developed? How is the ſenſibility of children to be tried? How " is the young heart to diſplay its moſt amiable feelings?" a ſentimental preceptreſs will impatiently inquire.

The amiable feelings of the heart need not be diſplayed; they may be ſufficiently exerciſed without the ſtimulus either of our eloquence or our applauſe. In Madame de Silleri's account of the education of the children of the duke of Orleans there appears rather too much ſentimental artifice and management. When the ducheſs of Orleans was ill, the children were inſtructed to write " charming " notes" from day to day, and from hour to hour, to inquire how ſhe did. Once, when a ſervant was going from Saint Leu to Paris, Madame de Silleri aſked her pupils if they had any com-

miſſions; the little duke de Chartres ſaid Yes, and he gave a meſſage about a bird cage, but he did not recollect to write to his mother, till ſomebody whiſpered to him that he had forgotten it. Madame de Silleri calls this childiſh forgetfulneſs a "heinous of-" fence;" but was not it very natural, that the boy ſhould think of his bird cage? and what mother would wiſh that her children ſhould have it put into their head, to inquire after her health in the complimentary ſtyle? Another time madame de Silleri is diſpleaſed with her pupils, becauſe they did not ſhew ſufficient ſympathy and concern for her when ſhe had a headache or ſore throat. The exact number of meſſages which, conſiſtently with the ſtrict duties of friendſhip, they ought to have ſent, are upon another occaſion preſcribed.

"I had yeſterday afternoon a violent attack of the colic, and "you diſcovered the greateſt ſenſibility. By the journal of M. "le Brun, I find it was the duke de Montpenſier who thought "this morning of writing to inquire how I did. You left me "yeſterday in a very calm ſtate, and there was no reaſon for "anxiety; but, conſiſtently with the ſtrict duties of friendſhip, you "ought to have given orders before you went to bed, for inqui-"ries to be made at eight o'clock in the morning to know whe-"ther I had had any return of my complaint during the night; "and you ſhould again have ſent at ten to learn from myſelf the "inſtant I awoke the exact ſtate of my health. Such are the be-"nevolent and tender cares which a lively and ſincere friendſhip "dictates. You muſt accuſtom yourſelves to the obſervance of "them if you wiſh to be loved."

Another day madame de Silleri told the duke de Chartres, that he

he had a very idiotic appearance, becauſe, when he went to ſee his mother, his attention was taken up by two parroquets which happened to be in the room. All theſe reproaches and documents could not, we ſhould apprehend, tend to increaſe the real ſenſibility and affection of children. Gratitude is one of the moſt certain, but one of the lateſt, rewards, which preceptors and parents ſhould expect from their pupils. Thoſe who are too impatient to wait for the gradual developement of the affections, will obtain from their children, inſtead of warm, genuine, enlightened gratitude, nothing but the expreſſion of cold, conſtrained, ſtupid hypocriſy. During the proceſs of education a child cannot perceive its ultimate end; how can he judge whether the means employed by his parents are well adapted to effect their purpoſes? Moments of reſtraint and of privation, or, perhaps, of poſitive pain, muſt be endured by children under the mildeſt ſyſtem of education: they muſt, therefore, perceive, that their parents are the immediate cauſe of ſome evils to them; the remote good is beyond their view. And can we expect from an infant the ſyſtematic reſignation of an optimiſt? Belief upon truſt is very different from that which ariſes from experience; and no one, who underſtands the human heart, will expect incompatible feelings; in the mind of a child the feeling of preſent pain is incompatible with gratitude. Mrs. Macaulay mentions a ſtriking inſtance of extorted gratitude. A poor child, who had been taught to return thanks for every thing, had a bitter medicine given to her; when ſhe had drunk it ſhe curtſied, and ſaid, "Thank you for my good ſtuff." There was a miſtake in the medicine, and the child died the next morning.

Children who are not ſentimentally educated often offend by their ſimplicity, and frequently diſguſt people of impatient feelings, by their apparent indifference to things which are expected to touch their ſenſibility. Let us be content with nature, or rather

let us never exchange ſimplicity for affectation. Nothing hurts young people more than to be watched continually about their feelings, to have their countenances ſcrutinized, and the degrees of their ſenſibility meaſured by the ſurveying eye of the unmerciful ſpectator. Under the conſtraint of ſuch examinations they can think of nothing, but that they are looked at, and feel nothing but ſhame or apprehenſion: they are afraid to lay their minds open, leſt they ſhould be convicted of ſome deficiency of feeling. On the contrary, children who are not in dread of this ſentimental inquiſition ſpeak their minds, the truth, and the whole truth, without effort or diſguiſe: they lay open their hearts, and tell their thoughts as they ariſe, with ſimplicity that would not fear to enter even "The palace of Truth *."

A little girl, Ho——, who was not quite four years old, aſked her mother to give her a plaything: one of her ſiſters had juſt before aſked for the ſame thing. "I cannot give it to you both," ſaid the mother.

Ho——. No, but I wiſh you to give it to me, and not to E——.

Mother. Don't you wiſh your ſiſter to have what ſhe wants?

Ho—. Mother, if I ſay that I *don't* wiſh ſo, will you give it to me?

Perhaps this *naïveté* might have diſpleaſed ſome ſcrupulous admirers of politeneſs, who could not diſcover in it ſymptoms of that independent ſimplicity of character, for which the child who made this ſpeech was diſtinguiſhed.

* V. Le Palais de la Vérité.—Madame de GENLIS Veillées du Château.

"Do you *always* love me?"—ſaid a mother to her ſon, who was about 4 years old.

"Always," ſaid the child, "except when I am aſleep?"

Mother. "And why do not you love me when you are aſleep?"

Son. "Becauſe I do not think of you then."

This ſenſible anſwer ſhewed, that the boy reflected accurately upon his own feelings, and a judicious parent muſt conſequently have a ſober certainty of his affection. The thoughtleſs careſſes of children, who are never accuſtomed to reaſon, are laviſhed alike upon ſtrangers and friends, and their fondneſs of to-day may, without any reaſonable cauſe, become averſion by to-morrow.

Children are often aſked to tell which of their friends they love the beſt, but they are ſeldom required to aſſign any reaſon for their choice. It is not prudent to queſtion them frequently about their own feelings; but whenever they expreſs any decided preference we ſhould endeavour to *lead*, not to *drive* them to reflect upon the reaſons for their affection. They will probably at firſt mention ſome particular inſtance of kindneſs, which they have lately received from the perſon whom they prefer. "I like ſuch "a perſon becauſe he mended my top."—"I like ſuch another "becauſe he took me out to walk with him and let me gather "flowers." By degrees we may teach children to generalize their ideas, and to perceive that they like people for being either uſeful or agreeable.

The deſire to return kindneſs by kindneſs ariſes very early in the mind, and the hope of conciliating the good will of the power-

ful beings by whom they are ſurrounded, is one of the firſt wiſhes that appears in the minds of intelligent and affectionate children. From this ſenſe of mutual dependence the firſt principles of ſocial intercourſe are deduced, and we may render our pupils either mean ſycophants or uſeful and honourable members of ſociety, by the methods which we uſe to direct their firſt efforts to pleaſe. It ſhould be our object to convince them, that the exchange of mutual good offices contributes to happineſs, and whilſt we connect the deſire to aſſiſt others with the perception of the beneficial conſequences that eventually ariſe to themſelves, we may be certain that children will never become blindly ſelfiſh, or idly ſentimental. We cannot help admiring the ſimplicity, ſtrength of mind, and good ſenſe, of a little girl of four years old, who, when ſhe was put into a ſtage coach with a number of ſtrangers, looked round upon them all, and after a few minutes ſilence addreſſed them with the imperfect articulation of infancy in the following words:

"If you'll be good to me, I'll be good to you."

Whilſt we were writing upon ſympathy and ſenſibility we met with the following appoſite paſſage.

"In 1765, I was," ſays M. de St. Pierre, "at Dreſden, at a "play acted at court; it was the Père de Famille. The electoreſs "came in with one of her daughters, who might be about five or "ſix years old. An officer of the Saxon guards, who came with "me to the play, whiſpered, 'That child will intereſt you as "much as the play.' As ſoon as ſhe was ſeated, ſhe placed "both her hands on the front of the box, fixed her eyes upon the "ſtage, and continued with her mouth open, all attention to the "motions of the actors. It was truly touching to ſee their dif-

"ferent

" ferent paſſions painted on her face as in a glaſs. There appeared
" in her countenance ſucceſſively, anxiety, ſurpriſe, melancholy,
" and grief; at length the intereſt increaſing in every ſcene tears
" began to flow, which ſoon ran in abundance down her little
" cheeks; then came agitation, ſighs, and loud ſobs; at laſt they
" were obliged to carry her out of the box leſt ſhe ſhould choak
" herſelf with crying. My next neighbour told me, that every
" time that this young princeſs came to a pathetic play, ſhe was
" obliged to leave the houſe before the cataſtrophe."

" I have ſeen," continues M. de St. Pierre, " inſtances of ſen-
" ſibility ſtill more touching amongſt the children of the common
" people, becauſe the emotion was not here produced by any thea-
" trical effect. As I was walking ſome years ago in the Pré St.
" Gervais, at the beginning of winter, I ſaw a poor woman lying
" on the ground buſied in weeding a bed of ſorrel; near her was
" a little girl of ſix years old at the utmoſt, ſtanding motionleſs,
" and all purple with cold. I addreſſed myſelf to this woman,
" who appeared to be ill, and I aſked her what was the matter
" with her. ' Sir,' ſaid ſhe, ' for theſe three months I have
" ſuffered terribly from the rheumatiſm, but my illneſs troubles
" me leſs than this child, ſhe never will leave me; if I ſay to her,
" Thou art quite frozen, go and warm thyſelf in the houſe,' ſhe
" anſwers me, ' Alas! mamma, if I leave you, you'll certainly
" fall ill again?'

" Another time, being at Marly, I went to ſee in the groves of
" that magnificent park, that charming group of children who
" are feeding with vine leaves and grapes a goat who ſeems to be
" playing with them. Near this ſpot is an open ſummer houſe,

" where

" where Louis XV. on fine days, uſed ſometimes to take refreſh-
" ment. As it was ſhowery weather, I went to take ſhelter for a
" few minutes. I found there three children, who were much
" more intereſting than children of marble. They were two little
" girls, very pretty, and very buſily employed in picking up all
" round the ſummer houſe dry ſticks, which they put into a ſort
" of wallet which was lying upon the king's table, whilſt a little
" ill clothed thin boy was devouring a bit of bread in one corner
" of the room. I aſked the talleſt of the children, who appeared
" to be between eight and nine years old, what ſhe meant to do
" with the wood which ſhe was gathering together with ſo much
" eagerneſs. She anſwered, ' Sir, you ſee that little boy, he is very
" unhappy. He has a mother-in-law'—(Why always *a mother-*
" *in-law?)* ' He has a mother-in-law who ſends him all day long
" to look for wood, when he does not bring any home he is beat-
" en; when he has got any, the Swiſs who ſtands at the en-
" trance of the park takes it all away from him, and keeps it for
" himſelf. The boy is almoſt ſtarved with hunger, and we have
" given him our breakfaſt.' After having ſaid theſe words, ſhe and
" her companion finiſhed filling the little wallet, they packed it
" upon the boy's ſhoulders, and they ran before their unfortunate
" friend to ſee that he might paſs in ſafety."

We have read theſe three anecdotes to ſeveral children, and have found that the *active* friends of the little wood-cutter were the moſt admired. It is probable, that amongſt children who have been much praiſed for expreſſions of ſenſibility, the young lady who wept ſo bitterly at the play-houſe would be preferred; affectionate children will like the little girl who ſtood purple with cold beſide her ſick mother; but if they have been well educated,

they

they will probably expreſs ſome ſurpriſe at her motionleſs attitude; they will aſk why ſhe did not try to help her mother to weed the bed of ſorrel.

It requires much ſkill and delicacy in our conduct towards children, to preſerve a proper medium between the indulging and the repreſſing their ſenſibility. We are cruel towards them when we ſuſpect their genuine expreſſions of affection; nothing hurts the temper of a generous child more than this ſpecies of injuſtice. Receive his expreſſions of kindneſs and gratitude with cold reſerve, or a look that implies a doubt of his truth, and you give him ſo much pain, that you not only repreſs, but deſtroy his affectionate feelings. On the contrary, if you appear touched and delighted by his careſſes, from the hope of pleaſing he will be naturally inclined to repeat ſuch demonſtrations of ſenſibility: this repetition ſhould be gently diſcouraged, leſt it ſhould lead to affectation. At the ſame time, though we take this precaution, we ſhould conſider, that children are not early ſenſible that affectation is either ridiculous or diſguſting; they are not conſcious of doing any thing wrong by repeating what they have once perceived to be agreeable in their own, or in the manners of others. They frequently imitate, without any idea that imitation is diſpleaſing; their object, as Locke obſerves, is to pleaſe by affectation, they only miſtake the means; we ſhould rectify this miſtake without treating it as a crime.

A little girl of five years old ſtood beſide her mother, obſerving the diſtribution of a diſh of ſtrawberries, the firſt ſtrawberries of the year; and ſeeing a number of people buſily helping, and being helped to cream and ſugar, ſaid in a low voice, not meant to at-

tract attention, "I like to ſee people helping one another." Had the child, at this inſtant, been praiſed for this natural expreſſion of ſympathy, the pleaſure of praiſe would have been immediately ſubſtituted in her mind, inſtead of the feeling of benevolence, which was in itſelf ſufficiently agreeable; and, perhaps, from a deſire to pleaſe, ſhe would, upon the next favourable occaſion, have repeated the ſame ſentiment; this we ſhould immediately call affectation, but how could the child foreſee that the repetition of what we formerly liked would be offenſive? We ſhould not firſt extol ſympathy, and then diſdain affectation; our encomiums frequently produce the faults by which we are diſguſted. Senſibility and ſympathy, when they have proper objects, and full employment, do not look for applauſe; they are ſufficiently happy in their own enjoyments. Thoſe who have attempted to teach children muſt have obſerved, that ſympathy is immediately connected with all the imitative arts; the nature of this connexion, more eſpecially in poetry and painting, has been pointed out with ingenuity and eloquence by thoſe* whoſe excellence in theſe arts entitle their theories to our prudent attention. We ſhall not attempt to repeat, we refer to their obſervations. Sufficient occupation for ſympathy may be found by cultivating the talents of young people.

Without repeating here what has been ſaid in many other places, it may be neceſſary to remind all who are concerned in *female* education, that peculiar caution is neceſſary to manage female ſenſibility; to make, what is called the heart, a ſource of permanent pleaſure, we muſt cultivate the reaſoning powers at the ſame time that

* Sir Joſhua Reynolds's Diſcourſes. Dr. Darwin's Critical Interludes in the Botanic Garden, and his chapter on Sympathy and Imitation in Zoonomia.

we

we repreſs the enthuſiaſm of *fine feeling*. Women, from their ſituation and duties in ſociety, are called upon rather for the daily exerciſe of quiet domeſtic virtues, than for thoſe ſplendid acts of generoſity, or thoſe exaggerated expreſſions of tenderneſs, which are the characteriſtics of heroines in romance. Sentimental authors, who paint with enchanting colours all the graces and all the virtues in happy union, teach us to expect that this union ſhould be indiſſoluble. Afterwards, from the natural influence of aſſociation, we expect in real life to meet with virtue when we ſee grace, and we are diſappointed, almoſt diſguſted, when we find virtue unadorned. This falſe aſſociation has a double effect upon the conduct of women; it prepares them to be pleaſed, and it excites them to endeavour to pleaſe by adventitious charms, rather than by thoſe qualities which merit eſteem. Women, who have been much addicted to common novel-reading, are always acting in imitation of ſome Jemima, or Almeria, who never exiſted, and they perpetually miſtake plain William and Thomas for "*My Beverly!*" They have another peculiar misfortune; they require continual great emotions to keep them in tolerable humour with themſelves; they muſt have tears in their eyes, or they are apprehenſive that their hearts are growing hard. They have accuſtomed themſelves to ſuch violent ſtimulus, that they cannot endure the languor to which they are ſubject in the intervals of delirium. Pink appears pale to the eye that is uſed to ſcarlet, and common food is inſipid to the taſte which has been vitiated by the high ſeaſonings of art.

A celebrated French actreſs, in the wane of her charms, and who, for that reaſon, began to feel weary of the world, exclaimed,

whilſt ſhe was recounting what ſhe had ſuffered from a faithleſs lover, " Ah c'étoit le bon temps, j'étois bien malheureuſe* !"

The happy age in which women can, with any grace or effect, be romantically wretched, is, even with the beautiful, but a ſhort ſeaſon of felicity. The ſentimental ſorrows of any female mourner, of more than thirty years ſtanding, command but little ſympathy, and leſs admiration; and what other conſolations are ſuited to ſentimental ſorrows?

Women, who cultivate their reaſoning powers, and who acquire taſtes for ſcience and literature, find ſufficient variety in life, and do not require the *ſtimulus* of diſſipation, or of romance. Their ſympathy and ſenſibility are engroſſed by proper objects, and connected with habits of uſeful exertion: they uſually feel the affection which others profeſs, and actually enjoy the happineſs which others deſcribe.

* D'Alembert.

CHAPTER

CHAPTER XI.

ON VANITY, PRIDE, AND AMBITION.

We ſhall not weary the reader by any common place declamation upon theſe moral topics. No great ſubtlety of diſtinction is requiſite to mark the differences betwixt Vanity and Pride, ſince thoſe differences have been pointed out by every moraliſt, who has hoped to pleaſe mankind by an accurate delineation of the failings of human nature. Whatever diſtinctions exiſt, or may be ſuppoſed to exiſt, between the characters in which pride or vanity predominates, it will readily be allowed, that there is one thing in which they both agree, they both receive pleaſure from the approbation of others, and from their own. We are diſguſted with the vain man, when he intemperately indulges in praiſe of himſelf, however juſtly he may be entitled to that praiſe, becauſe he offends againſt thoſe manners which we have been accuſtomed to think polite, and he claims from us a greater portion of ſympathy than we can poſſibly afford to give him. We are not, however, pleaſed by the negligence with which the proud man treats us; we do not like to ſee that he can exiſt in independent happineſs, ſatisfied with a cool

internal ſenſe of his own merits; he loſes our ſympathy, becauſe he does not appear to value it.

If we could give our pupils exactly the character we wiſh, what degrees of vanity and pride ſhould we deſire them to have, and how ſhould we regulate theſe paſſions? Should we not deſire, that their ambition to excel might be ſufficient to produce the greateſt poſſible exertions, directed to the beſt poſſible objects; that their opinion of themſelves ſhould be ſtrictly juſt, and ſhould never be expreſſed in ſuch a manner as to offend againſt propriety, or ſo as to forfeit the ſympathy of mankind. As to the degree of pleaſure which they ſhould feel from their ſecret reflexions upon their own meritorious conduct, we ſhould certainly deſire this to be as laſting, and as exquiſite, as poſſible. A conſiderable portion of the happineſs of life ariſes from the ſenſe of ſelf-approbation; we ſhould therefore ſecure this gratification in its utmoſt perfection. We muſt obſerve, that, however independent the proud man imagines himſelf to be of the opinions of all round him, he muſt form his judgment of his own merits from ſome ſtandard of compariſon, by ſome laws drawn from obſervation of what mankind in general, or thoſe whom he particularly eſteems, think wiſe or amiable. He muſt begin then in the ſame manner with the vain man, whom he deſpiſes, by collecting the ſuffrages of others; if he ſelects with perfect wiſdom the opinions which are moſt juſt, he forms his character upon excellent principles, and the more ſteadily he abides by his firſt views, the more he commands and obtains reſpect. But if unfortunately he makes a miſtake at firſt, his obſtinacy in error is not to be eaſily corrected, for he is not affected by the general voice of diſapprobation, nor by the partial loſs of the common pleaſures of ſympathy. The vain man, on the contrary, is in danger,

danger, let him form his firſt notions of right and wrong ever ſo juſtly, of changing them when he happens to be in ſociety with any perſons who do not agree with him in their moral opinions, or who refuſe him that applauſe which ſupports his own feeble ſelf-approbation. We muſt, in education, endeavour to guard againſt theſe oppoſite dangers; we muſt enlighten the underſtanding to give our pupils the power of forming their rules of conduct rightly, and we muſt give them ſufficient ſtrength of mind to abide by the principles which they have formed. When we firſt praiſe children, we muſt be careful to aſſociate pleaſure with thoſe things which are really deſerving of approbation. If we praiſe them for beauty, or for any happy expreſſions, which entertain us, but which entertain us merely as the ſprightly nonſenſe of childhood, we create vanity in the minds of our pupils; we give them falſe ideas of merit, and, if we excite them to exertions, they are not exertions directed to any valuable objects. Praiſe is a ſtrong ſtimulus to induſtry, if it be properly managed; but if we give it in too large and laviſh quantities early in life, we ſhall ſoon find that it loſes its effect, and yet that the *patient* languiſhes for want of the excitation which cuſtom has rendered almoſt eſſential to his exiſtence. We ſay the *patient*, for this mental languor may be conſidered entirely as a diſeaſe. For its cure, ſee the ſecond volume of Zoonomia, under the article Vanity.

Children, who are habituated to the daily and hourly food of praiſe, continually require this ſuſtenance unleſs they are attended to; but we may gradually break bad habits. It is ſaid that ſome animals can ſupply themſelves at a ſingle draught with what will quench their thirſt for many days. The human animal may, perhaps, by education, be taught ſimilar foreſight

and

and abſtinence in the management of his thirſt for flattery. Young people, who live with perſons that ſeldom beſtow praiſe, do not expect that ſtimulus, and they are content if they diſcover by certain ſigns either in the countenance, manner, or tone of voice, of thoſe whom they wiſh to pleaſe, that they are tolerably well ſatisfied. It is of little conſequence by what language approbation be conveyed, whether by words, or looks, or by that ſilence which ſpeaks with ſo much eloquence; but it is of great importance that our pupils ſhould ſet a high value upon the expreſſions of our approbation. They will value it in proportion to their eſteem and their affection for us; we include in the word eſteem a belief in our juſtice, and in our diſcernment. Expreſſions of affection, aſſociated with praiſe, not only increaſe the pleaſure, but they alter the nature of that pleaſure; and if they gratify vanity, they at the ſame time excite ſome of the beſt feelings of the heart. The ſelfiſhneſs of vanity is corrected by this aſſociation; and the two pleaſures of ſympathy and ſelf-complacency ſhould never, when we can avoid it, be ſeparated.

Children, who are well educated, and who have acquired an habitual deſire for the approbation of their friends, may continue abſolutely indifferent to the praiſe of ſtrangers, or of *common* acquaintance; nor is it probable that this indifference ſhould ſuddenly be conquered, becauſe the greateſt part of the pleaſure of praiſe in their mind depends upon the eſteem and affection which they feel for the perſons by whom it is beſtowed. Inſtead of deſiring that our pupils ſhould entirely repreſs, in the company of their own family, the pleaſure which they feel from the praiſe that is given to them by their friends; we ſhould rather indulge them in this natural expanſion of mind; we ſhould rather permit their youthful vanity

to

to diſplay itſelf openly to thoſe whom they moſt love and eſteem, than drive them, by unreaſonable ſeverity, and a cold refuſal of ſympathy, into the ſociety of leſs rigid obſervers. Thoſe who have an averſion to vanity will not eaſily bear with its uncultivated intemperance of tongue; but they ſhould conſider, that much of what diſguſts them is owing to the ſimplicity of childhood, which muſt be allowed time to learn that reſpect for the feelings of others which teaches us to reſtrain our own: but we muſt not be in haſte to reſtrain, leſt we teach hypocriſy, inſtead of ſtrength of mind, or real humility. If we expect that children ſhould excel, and ſhould not know that they excel, we expect impoſſibilities; we expect at the ſame time intelligence and ſtupidity. If we deſire that they ſhould be excited by praiſe, and that at the ſame time they ſhould feel no pleaſure in the applauſe which they have earned, we deſire things that are incompatible. If we encourage children to be frank and ſincere, and yet, at the ſame time, reprove them whenever they naturally expreſs their opinions of themſelves, or the pleaſurable feelings of ſelf-approbation, we ſhall counteract our own wiſhes. Inſtead of haſtily blaming children for the ſincere and ſimple expreſſion of their ſelf-complacency, or of their deſire for the approbation of others, we ſhould gradually point out to them the truth. That thoſe who refrain from that diſplay of their own perfections which we call vanity, in fact are well repaid for the conſtraint which they put upon themſelves by the ſuperior degree of reſpect and ſympathy which they obtain; that vain people effectually counteract their own wiſhes, and meet with contempt, inſtead of admiration. By appealing conſtantly when we praiſe to the judgment of the pupils themſelves, we ſhall at once teach them the habit of rejudging flattery, and ſubſtitute, by inſenſible degrees, patient, ſteady con-

fidence in themſelves, for the wavering, weak, impatience of vanity. In proportion as any one's confidence in himſelf increaſes, his anxiety for the applauſe of others diminiſhes: people are very ſeldom vain of any accompliſhments in which they obviouſly excel, but they frequently continue to be vain of thoſe which are doubtful. Where mankind have not confirmed their own judgment, they are reſtleſs, and continually aim either at convincing others, or themſelves, that they are in the right. Hogarth, who invented a new and original manner of ſatiriſing the follies of mankind, was not vain of this talent, but was extremely vain of his hiſtorical paintings, which were indifferent performances. Men of acknowledged literary talents are ſeldom fond of amateurs, but, if they are but half ſatisfied of their own ſuperiority, they collect the tribute of applauſe with avidity, and without diſcrimination or delicacy. Voltaire has been reproached with treating ſtrangers rudely who went to Ferney to ſee and admire a philoſopher as a prodigy. Voltaire valued his time more than he did this vulgar admiration; his viſitors, whoſe underſtanding had not gone through exactly the ſame proceſs, who had not probably been ſatisfied with public applauſe, and who ſet, perhaps, a conſiderable value upon their own praiſe, could not comprehend this appearance of indifference to admiration in Voltaire, eſpecially when it was well known that he was not inſenſible of fame. He was at an advanced age exquiſitely anxious about the fate of one of his tragedies, and a public coronation at the theatre at Paris had power to inebriate him at eighty-four. Thoſe who have exhauſted the ſtimulus of wine, may yet be intoxicated by opinion. The voice of numbers appears to be ſometimes neceſſary to give delight to thoſe who have been fatigued with the praiſe of individuals: but this taſte for *acclamation* is extremely

tremely dangerous. A multitude of good judges ſeldom meet together.

By a ſlight difference in their manner of reaſoning, two men of abilities, who ſet out with the ſame deſire for fame, may acquire different habits of pride, or of vanity; the one may value the number, the other may appreciate the judgment of his admirers. There is ſomething not only more wiſe, but more elevated, in this latter ſpecies of ſelect triumph; the noiſe is not ſo great; the muſic is better. "If I liſtened to the muſic of praiſe," ſays an hiſtorian, who obviouſly was not inſenſible to its charms, "I was more ſe-"rioufly ſatisfied with the approbation of my *judges*. The candour "of Dr. Robertſon embraced his diſciple. A letter from Mr. Hume "overpaid the labour of ten years *." Surely no one can be diſpleaſed with this laſt generous expreſſion of enthuſiaſm; we are not ſo well ſatisfied with Buffon, when he oſtentatiouſly diſplays the epiſtles of a prince and an empreſs †.

Perhaps, by pointing out at proper opportunities the difference in our feelings with reſpect to vulgar and refined vanity, we might make a uſeful impreſſion upon thoſe, who have yet their habits to form. The converſion of vanity into pride is not ſo difficult a proceſs as thoſe, who have not analyſed both might, from the ſtriking difference of their appearance, imagine. By the oppoſite tendencies of education, oppoſite characters from the ſame original diſ-

* Gibbon. Memoirs of his Life and Writings, p. 148.—Perhaps Gibbon had this excellent line of Mrs. Barbauld's in his memory,

"And pay a life of hardſhips with a line."

† See Peltier's State of Paris in the years 1795 and 1796.

poſitions are produced. Cicero, had he been early taught to deſpiſe the applauſe of the multitude, would have turned away like the proud philoſopher, who aſked his friends what abſurdity he had uttered when he heard the populace loud in acclamations of his ſpeech; and the cynic, whoſe vanity was ſeen through the holes in his cloak, might, perhaps, by a ſlight difference in his education, have been rendered ambitious of the Macedonian purple.

In attempting to convert vanity into pride, we muſt begin by exerciſing the vain patient in forbearance of preſent pleaſure; it is not enough to convince his underſtanding, that the advantages of proud humility are great; he may be perfectly ſenſible of this, and may yet have ſo little command over himſelf, that his loquacious vanity may get the better, from hour to hour, of his better judgment. Habits are not to be inſtantaneouſly conquered by reaſon; if we do not keep this fact in our remembrance, we ſhall be frequently diſappointed in education; and we ſhall, perhaps, end by thinking that reaſon can do nothing, if we begin by thinking that ſhe can do every thing. We muſt not expect, that a vain child ſhould ſuddenly break and forget all his paſt aſſociations; but we may, by a little early attention, prevent much of the trouble of curing, or converting, the diſeaſe of vanity.

When children firſt begin to learn accompliſhments, or to apply themſelves to literature, thoſe who inſtruct are apt to encourage them with too large a portion of praiſe; *the ſmalleſt quantity of ſtimulus that can produce the exertion we deſire ſhould be uſed*; if we uſe more, we waſte our power, and injure our pupil. As ſoon as habit has made any exertion familiar, and conſequently eaſy, we may withdraw the original excitation, and the exertion will ſtill continue.

continue. In learning, for inſtance, a new language, at firſt, whilſt the pupil is in the midſt of the difficulties of regular and irregular verbs, and when, in tranſlation, a dictionary is wanted at every moment, the occupation itſelf cannot be very agreeable, but we are excited by the hope that our labour will every day diminiſh, and that we ſhall at laſt enjoy the entertainment of reading uſeful and agreeable books. Children, who have not learnt by experience the pleaſures of literature, cannot feel this hope as ſtrongly as we do, we therefore excite them by praiſe; but by degrees they begin to feel the pleaſure of ſucceſs and occupation; when theſe are felt, we may and ought to withdraw the unneceſſary excitements of praiſe. If we continue, we miſlead the child's mind, and whilſt we deprive him of his natural reward, we give him a factitious taſte. When any moral habit is to be acquired, or when we wiſh that our pupil ſhould cure himſelf of any fault, we muſt employ at firſt ſtrong excitement, and reward with warmth and eloquence of approbation; when the fault is conquered, when the virtue is acquired, the extraordinary excitement ſhould be withdrawn, and all this ſhould not be done with an air of myſtery and artifice; the child ſhould know all that we do, and why we do it; the ſooner he learns how his own mind is managed the better, the ſooner he will aſſiſt in his own education.

Every body muſt have obſerved, that languor of mind ſucceeds to the intoxication of vanity; if we can avoid the intoxication, we ſhall avoid the languor. Common ſayings often imply thoſe ſenſible obſervations which philoſophers, when they theorize only, expreſs in other words. We frequently hear it ſaid to a child, "Praiſe ſpoils you; my praiſe did you harm; you can't bear "praiſe well; you grow conceited; you become idle; you are

"good for nothing, becauſe you have been too much flattered." All theſe expreſſions ſhow, that the conſequences of over ſtimulating the mind by praiſe have been vaguely taken notice of in education; but no general rules have been deduced from theſe obſervations. With children of different habits and temperaments the ſame degree of excitement acts differently, ſo that it is ſcarcely poſſible to fix upon any poſitive quantity fit for all diſpoſitions, the quantity muſt be relative; but we may, perhaps, fix upon a criterion by which, in moſt caſes, the proportion may be aſcertained. The golden rule * which an eminent phyſician has given to the medical world for aſcertaining the neceſſary and uſeful quantity of ſtimulus for weak and feveriſh patients, may, with advantage, be applied in education. Whenever praiſe produces the intoxication of vanity, it is hurtful; whenever the appearances of vanity diminiſh in conſequence of praiſe, we may be ſatisfied that it does good, that it increaſes the pupil's confidence in himſelf, and his ſtrength of mind. We repeat that perſons who have confidence in themſelves may be proud, but are never vain; that vanity cannot ſupport herſelf without the concurring flattery of others; pride is ſatisfied with his own approbation. In the education of children who are more inclined to pride than to vanity, we muſt preſent large objects to the underſtanding, and large motives muſt be uſed to excite voluntary exertion. If the underſtanding of proud people be not early cultivated, they frequently fix upon ſome falſe ideas of honour or dignity, to which they are reſolute martyrs through life. Thus the high born Spaniards, if we may be allowed to reaſon from the imperfect hiſtory of national character. The Spaniards, who aſſociate the ideas of dignity and indolence, would rather ſubmit to

* See Zoonomia, vol. i. p. 99.

the

the evils of poverty, than to the imaginary disgrace of working for their bread. Volney, and the baron de Tott, give us some curious instances of the pride of the Turks, which prevents them from being taught any useful arts by foreigners. To shew how early false associations are formed and supported by pride, we need but recollect the anecdote of the child mentioned by de Tott *. The baron de Tott bought a pretty toy for a present for a little Turkish friend, but the child was too proud to seem pleased with the toy; the child's grandfather came into the room, saw, and was delighted with the toy, sat down on the carpet, and played with it till he broke it. We like the second childhood of the grandfather better than the premature old age of the grandson.

The self-command which the fear of disgrace insures can produce either great virtues, or great vices. Revenge and generosity are, it is said, to be found in their highest state amongst nations and individuals characterized by pride. The early objects which are associated with the idea of honour in the mind are of great consequence; but it is of yet more consequence to teach proud minds early to bend to the power of reason, or rather to glory in being governed by reason. They should be instructed, that the only possible means of maintaining their opinions amongst persons of sense is to support them by unanswerable arguments. They should be taught that, to secure respect, they must deserve it; and their self-denial, or self-command, should never obtain that tacit admiration which they most value, except where it is exerted for useful and rational purposes. The constant custom of appealing, in the last resort, to their own judgment, which distinguishes the proud

* V. De Tott's Memoirs, p. 138, a note.

from the vain, makes it peculiarly neceſſary that the judgment, to which ſo much is truſted, ſhould be highly cultivated. A vain man may be tolerably well conducted in life by a ſenſible friend; a proud man ought to be able to conduct himſelf perfectly well, becauſe he will not accept of any aſſiſtance. It ſeems that ſome proud people confine their benevolent virtues within a ſmaller ſphere than others; they value only their own relations, their friends, their country, or whatever is connected with themſelves. This ſpecies of pride may be corrected by the ſame means which are uſed to increaſe ſympathy *. Thoſe, who either from temperament, example, or accidental circumſtances, have acquired the habit of repreſſing and commanding their emotions, muſt be carefully diſtinguiſhed from the ſelfiſh and inſenſible. In the preſent times, when the affectation of ſenſibility is to be dreaded, we ſhould rather encourage that ſpecies of pride which diſdains to diſplay the affections of the heart. "You Romans triumph over your tears, "and call it virtue! I triumph in my tears," ſays Caractacus: his tears were reſpectable, but in general the Roman triumph would command the moſt ſympathy.

Some people attribute to pride all expreſſions of confidence in oneſelf: theſe may be offenſive to common ſociety, but they are ſometimes powerful over the human mind, and where they are genuine, mark ſomewhat ſuperior in character. Much of the effect of lord Chatham's eloquence, much of his tranſcendant influence in public, muſt be attributed to the confidence which he ſhewed in his own ſuperiority. "I trample upon impoſſibilities!" was an exclamation which no inferior mind would dare to make. Would

* V. Sympathy.

the

the houſe of commons have permitted any one but lord Chatham to have anſwered an oration by "Tell me, gentle ſhepherd, where?" The danger of failing, the hazard that he runs of becoming ridiculous who verges upon the moral ſublime, is taken into our account when we judge of the action, and we pay involuntary tribute to courage and ſucceſs: but how miſerable is the fate of the man who miſtakes his own powers, and upon trial is unable to ſupport his aſſumed ſuperiority; mankind revenge themſelves without mercy upon his ridiculous pride, eager to teach him the difference between inſolence and magnanimity. Young people inclined to overrate their own talents, or to undervalue the abilities of others, ſhould frequently have inſtances given to them from real life of the mortifications and diſgrace to which imprudent boaſters expoſe themſelves. Where they are able to demonſtrate their own abilities, they run no riſk in ſpeaking with decent confidence; but where their ſucceſs depends, in any degree, either upon fortune, or opinion, they ſhould never run the hazard of preſumption. Modeſty prepoſſeſſes mankind in favour of its poſſeſſor, and has the advantage of being both graceful and ſafe: this was perfectly underſtood by the crafty Ulyſſes, who neither raiſed his eyes, nor ſtretched his ſceptred hand, "when he firſt roſe to ſpeak." We do not, however, recommend this artificial modeſty; its trick is ſoon diſcovered, and its fameneſs of diſſimulation preſently diſguſts. Prudence ſhould prevent young people from hazardous boaſting; and good nature, and good ſenſe, which conſtitute real politeneſs, will reſtrain them from obtruding their merits to the mortification of their companions: but we do not expect from them total ignorance of their own comparative merit. The affectation of humility, when carried to the extreme, to which all affectation

is liable to be carried, appears full as ridiculous as troubleſome, and offenſive as any of the graces of vanity, or the airs of pride. Young people are cured of preſumption by mixing with ſociety, but they are not ſo eaſily cured of any ſpecies of affectation.

In the chapter on female accompliſhments we have endeavoured to point out, that the enlargement of underſtanding in the fair ſex, which muſt reſult from their increaſing knowledge, will neceſſarily correct the feminine foibles of vanity and affectation.

Strong, prophetic, eloquent praiſe, like that which the great lord Chatham beſtowed on his ſon, would rather inſpire in a generous ſoul noble emulation, than paltry vanity. "On this boy," ſaid he, laying his hand upon his ſon's head, "deſcends my man-"tle, with a double portion of my ſpirit!" Philip's praiſe of his ſon Alexander, when the boy rode the unmanageable horſe*, is another inſtance of the kind of praiſe capable of exciting ambition.

As to ambition, we muſt decide what ſpecies of ambition we mean, before we can determine whether it ought to be encouraged or repreſſed, whether it ſhould be claſſed amongſt virtues or vices; that is to ſay, whether it adds to the happineſs or the miſery of human creatures. "The inordinate deſire of fame," which often deſtroys the lives of millions when it is connected with ideas of military enthuſiaſm, is juſtly claſſed amongſt the "*diſeaſes of vo-*"*lition:*" for its deſcription and cure we refer to Zoonomia, vol. ii. Achilles will there appear to his admirers, perhaps, in a new light.

* V. Plutarch.

The

The ambition to riſe in the world uſually implies a mean ſordid deſire of riches, or what are called honours, to be obtained by the common arts of political intrigue, by cabal to win popular favour, or by addreſs to conciliate the patronage of the great. The experience of thoſe who have been governed during their lives by this paſſion, if paſſion it may be called, does not ſhew that it can confer much happineſs either in the purſuit, or attainment of its objects. See Bubb Doddington's Diary, a moſt uſeful book, a journal of the petty anxieties, and conſtant dependence, to which an ambitious courtier is neceſſarily ſubjected. See alſo Mirabeau's "Secret "Hiſtory of the Court of Berlin" for a picture of a man of great abilities degraded by the ſame ſpecies of low unprincipled competition. We may find, in theſe books, it is to be hoped, examples which will ſtrike young and generous minds, and which may inſpire them with contempt for the objects and the means of vulgar ambition. There is a more noble ambition, by which the enthuſiaſtic youth, perfect in the theory of all the virtues, and warm with yet unextinguiſhed benevolence, is apt to be ſeized; his heart beats with the hope of immortalizing himſelf by noble actions; he forms extenſive plans for the improvement and the happineſs of his fellow-creatures; he feels the want of power to carry theſe into effect; power becomes the object of his wiſhes. In the purſuit, in the attainment of this object, how are his feelings changed? Mr. Necker, in the preface to his work on French finance *, paints, with much eloquence, and with an appearance of perfect truth, the feelings of a man of virtue and genius, before and after the attainment of political power. The moment when a miniſter takes poſſeſſion of his place, ſurrounded by crowds and congratulations,

* Necker de l'Adminiſtration des Finances de la France, vol. i. p. 98.

is well deſcribed; and the ſucceeding moment, when clerks with immenſe portfolios enter, is a ſtriking contraſt. Examples from romance can never have ſuch a powerful effect upon the mind as thoſe which are taken from real life; but in proportion to the juſt and lively repreſentation of ſituations, and paſſions reſembling reality, fictions may convey uſeful moral leſſons. In the Cyropædia there is an admirable deſcription of the day ſpent by the victorious Cyrus, giving audience to the unmanageable multitude after the taking of Babylon had accompliſhed the fulneſs of his ambition *.

It has been obſerved, that theſe examples of the inſufficiency of the objects of ambition to happineſs ſeldom make any laſting impreſſion upon the minds of the ambitious. This may ariſe from two cauſes; from the reaſoning faculty's not having been ſufficiently cultivated, or from the habits of ambition being formed before proper examples are preſented to the judgment for compariſon. Some ambitious people, when they reaſon coolly, acknowledge and feel the folly of their purſuits, but ſtill from the force of habit they act immediately in obedience to the motives which they condemn: others, who have never been accuſtomed to reaſon firmly, believe themſelves to be in the right in the choice of their objects; and they cannot comprehend the arguments which are uſed by thoſe, who have not the ſame way of thinking as themſelves. If we fairly place facts before young people, who have been habituated to reaſon, and who have not yet been inſpired with the paſſion, or enſlaved by the habits of vulgar ambition, it is probable, that they will not be eaſily effaced from

* Cyropædia, vol. ii. page 303.

the

the memory, and that they will influence the conduct through life.

It ſometimes happens to men of a ſound underſtanding, and a philoſophic turn of mind, that their ambition decreaſes with their experience. They begin with, perhaps, ſome ardour an ambitious purſuit; but by degrees they find the pleaſure of the occupation ſufficient without the fame, which was their original object. This is the ſame proceſs which we have obſerved in the minds of children with reſpect to the pleaſures of literature, and the taſte for ſugar-plums.

Happy the child who can be taught to improve himſelf without the ſtimulus of ſweetmeats! Happy the man who can preſerve activity without the excitements of ambition!

CHAPTER XII.

BOOKS.

THE firſt books which are now uſually put into the hands of a child are Mrs. Barbauld's Leſſons; they are by far the beſt books of the kind that have ever appeared; thoſe only who know the difficulty, and the importance of ſuch compoſitions in education, can ſincerely rejoice, that the admirable talents of ſuch a writer have been employed in ſuch a work. We ſhall not apologize for offering a few remarks on ſome paſſages in theſe little books, becauſe we are convinced that we ſhall not offend.

Leſſons for children from three to four years old ſhould, we think, have been leſſons for children from four to five years old; few read, or ought to read, before that age.

"Charles ſhall have a pretty new leſſon."

In this ſentence the words pretty and new are aſſociated; but they repreſent ideas which ought to be kept ſeparate in the mind of a child. The love of novelty is cheriſhed in the minds of children

dren by the common expreſſions that we uſe to engage them to do what we deſire. "You ſhall have a new whip, a new hat," are improper modes of expreſſion to a child. We have ſeen a boy who had literally twenty new whips in one year, and we were preſent when his father, to comfort him when he was in pain, went out to buy him a *new* whip, though he had two or three ſcattered about the room.

The deſcription, in the firſt part of Mrs. Barbauld's Leſſons, of the naughty boy who tormented the robin, and who was afterwards ſuppoſed to be eaten by bears, is more objectionable than any in the book: the idea of killing is in itſelf very complex, and if explained, ſerves only to excite terror; and how can a child be made to comprehend why a cat *ſhould* catch mice, and not kill birds? or why ſhould this ſpecies of honeſty be expected from an animal of prey?

"I want my dinner."

Does Charles take it for granted, that what he eats is his own, and that he *muſt* have his dinner? Theſe and ſimilar expreſſions are words of courſe; but young children ſhould not be allowed to uſe them: if they are permitted to aſſume the tone of command, the feelings of impatience and ill temper quickly follow, and children become the little tyrants of a family. Property is a word of which young people have general ideas, and they may with very little trouble be prevented from claiming things to which they have no right. Mrs. Barbauld has judiciouſly choſen to introduce a little boy's daily hiſtory in theſe books; all children are extremely intereſted for Charles, and they are very apt to expect that every

thing which happens to him is to happen to them; and they believe that every thing he does is right; therefore, his biographer ſhould in another edition reviſe any of his expreſſions which may miſlead the future tribe of his little imitators.

"Maid, come and dreſs Charles."

After what we have already ſaid with reſpect to ſervants, we need only obſerve, that this ſentence for Charles ſhould not be read by a child; and that in which the maid is ſaid to bring home a gun, &c.; it is eaſy to ſtrike a pencil line acroſs it. All the paſſages which might have been advantageouſly omitted in theſe excellent little books, have been carefully obliterated before they were put into the hands of children, by a mother who knew the danger of early falſe aſſociations.

"Little boys don't eat butter."

"Nobody wears a hat in the houſe."

This is a very common method of ſpeaking, but it certainly is not proper towards children. Affirmative ſentences ſhould always expreſs real facts. Charles muſt know that ſome little boys do eat butter; and that ſome people wear their hats in their houſes. This mode of expreſſion, "Nobody does that!" "Every body does this!" lays the foundation for prejudice in the mind. This is the language of faſhion, which, more than conſcience, makes cowards of us all.

"I want ſome wine."

Would

Would it not be better to tell Charles in reply to this ſpeech, that wine is not good for him, than to ſay "Wine for little "boys! I never heard of ſuch a thing!" If Charles were to be ill, and it ſhould be neceſſary to give him wine; or were he to ſee another child drink it, he would loſe confidence in what was ſaid to him. We ſhould be very careful of our words, if we expect our pupils to have confidence in us; and if they have not, we need not attempt to educate them.

"The moon ſhines at night, when the ſun is gone to bed."

When the ſun is out of ſight, would be more correct, though not ſo pleaſing, perhaps, to the young reader. It is very proper to teach a child, that when the ſun diſappears, when the ſun is below the horizon, it is the time when moſt animals go to reſt; but we ſhould not do this by giving ſo falſe an idea as that the ſun is gone to bed. Every thing relative to the ſyſtem of the univerſe is above the comprehenſion of a child, we ſhould, therefore, be careful to prevent his forming erroneous opinions. We ſhould wait for a riper period of his underſtanding before we attempt poſitive inſtruction upon abſtract ſubjects.

The enumeration of the months in the year, the days in the week, of metals, &c. are excellent leſſons for a child who is juſt beginning to learn to read. The claſſification of animals into quadrupeds, bipeds, &c. is another uſeful ſpecimen of the manner in which children ſhould be taught to generalize their ideas. The pathetic deſcription of the poor timid hare running from the hunters, will leave an impreſſion upon the young and humane heart, which may perhaps ſave the life of many a hare. The poetic beauty

beauty, and eloquent ſimplicity of many of Mrs. Barbauld's Leſſons, cultivate the imagination of children, and their taſte, in the beſt poſſible manner.

The deſcription of the white ſwan with her long arched neck, "winning her eaſy way" through the waters, is beautiful; ſo is that of the nightingale ſinging upon her lone buſh by moonlight. Poetic deſcriptions of real objects are well ſuited to children; apoſtrophe and perſonification they underſtand, but all allegoric poetry is difficult to manage for them, becauſe they miſtake the poetic attributes for reality, and they acquire falſe and confuſed ideas. With regret children cloſe Mrs. Barbauld's little books, and parents become yet more ſenſible of their value, when they perceive that none can be found immediately to ſupply their place, or to continue the courſe of agreeable ideas which they have raiſed in the young pupil's imagination.

"Evenings at Home" do not immediately join to Leſſons for Children from three to four years old; and we know not where to find any books to fill the interval properly. The popular character of any book is eaſily learned, and its general merit eaſily aſcertained; this may ſatisfy careleſs, indolent tutors, but a more minute inveſtigation is neceſſary to parents who are anxious for the happineſs of their family, or deſirous to improve the art of education. Such parents will feel it to be their duty to look over every page of a book before it is truſted to their children; it is an arduous taſk, but none can be too arduous for the enlightened energy of parental affection. We are acquainted with the mother of a family, who has never truſted any book to her children, without having firſt

examined it herſelf with the moſt ſcrupulous attention; her care has been repaid with that ſucceſs in education, which ſuch care can alone enſure. We have ſeveral books before us marked by her pencil, and volumes which, having undergone ſome neceſſary operations by her ſciſſars, would in their mutilated ſtate ſhock the ſenſibility of a nice librarian. But ſhall the education of a family be ſacrificed to the beauty of a page, or even to the binding of a book? Few books can ſafely be given to children without the previous uſe of the pen, the pencil, and the ſciſſars. In the books which we have before us, in their corrected ſtate, we ſee ſometimes a few words blotted out, ſometimes half a page, ſometimes many pages are cut out. In turning over the leaves of "The "Children's Friend," we perceive, that the different ages at which different ſtories ſhould be read have been marked; and we were ſurpriſed to meet with ſome ſtories marked for ſix years old, and ſome for ſixteen in the ſame volume. We ſee that different ſtories have been marked with the initials of different names by this cautious mother, who conſidered the temper and habits of her children, as well as their ages.

As far as theſe notes refer peculiarly to her own family, they cannot be of uſe to the public; but the principles which governed a judicious parent in her ſelection muſt be capable of univerſal application.

It may be laid down as a firſt principle, that we ſhould preſerve children from the knowledge of any vice, or any folly, of which the idea has never yet entered their minds, and which they are not neceſſarily diſpoſed to learn by early example. Children who have never lived with ſervants, who have never aſſociated with ill educated companions of their own age, and who in their own family

family have heard nothing but good converſation, and ſeen none but good examples; will in their language, their manners, and their whole diſpoſition, be not only free from many of the faults common amongſt children, but they will abſolutely have no idea that there are ſuch faults. The language of children, who have heard no language but what is good, muſt be correct. On the contrary, children who hear a mixture of low and high vulgarity before their own habits are fixed, muſt, whenever they ſpeak, continually blunder; they have no rule to guide their judgment in their ſelection from the variety of dialects which they hear; probably they may often be reproved for their miſtakes, but theſe reproofs will be of no avail, whilſt the pupils continue to be puzzled between the example of the nurſery, and of the drawing room. It will coſt much time and pains to correct theſe defects, which might have been with little difficulty prevented. It is the ſame with other bad habits. Falſehood, caprice, diſhoneſty, obſtinacy, revenge, and all the train of vices which are the conſequences of miſtaken or neglected education, which are learned by bad example, and which are not inſpired by nature, need ſcarcely be known to children whoſe minds have from their infancy been happily regulated. Such children ſhould be ſedulouſly kept from contagion; their minds are untainted; they are ſafe in that ſpecies of ignorance, which alone can deſerve the name of bliſs. No books ſhould be put into the hands of this happy claſs of children, but ſuch as preſent the beſt models of virtue: there is no occaſion to ſhock them with caricatures of vice. Such caricatures they will not even underſtand to be well drawn, becauſe they are unacquainted with any thing like the originals. Examples to deter them from faults to which they have no propenſity muſt be uſeleſs, and may be dangerous: for the ſame reaſon that a book written in bad

language ſhould never be put into the hands of a child who ſpeaks correctly, a book exhibiting inſtances of vice ſhould never be given to a child who thinks and acts correctly. The love of novelty and of imitation is ſo ſtrong in children, that even for the pleaſure of imitating characters deſcribed in a book, or actions which ſtrike them as ſingular, they often commit real faults.

To this danger of catching faults by ſympathy, children of the greateſt ſimplicity are perhaps the moſt liable, becauſe they leaſt underſtand the nature and conſequences of the actions which they imitate.

During the age of imitation children ſhould not be expoſed to the influence of any bad examples till their habits are formed, and till they have not only the ſenſe to chooſe, but the fortitude to abide by their own choice. It may be ſaid, that "children muſt know "that vice exiſts; that, even amongſt their own companions, "there are ſome who have bad diſpoſitions; they cannot mix "even in the ſociety of children without ſeeing examples which "they ought to be prepared to avoid."

Theſe remarks are juſt with regard to pupils who are intended for a public ſchool, and no great nicety in the ſelection of their books is neceſſary; but we are now ſpeaking of children who are to be brought up in a private family. Why ſhould they be prepared to mix in the ſociety of children who have bad habits or bad diſpoſitions? Children ſhould not be educated for the ſociety of children; or ſhould they live in that ſociety during their education. We muſt not expect from them premature prudence, and all the ſocial virtues, before we have taken any meaſures to produce theſe virtues, or this tardy prudence. In private education there

is

is little chance that one error ſhould balance another; the experience of the pupil is much confined, the examples which he ſees are not ſo numerous and various as to counteract each other. Nothing therefore muſt be expected from the counteracting influence of oppoſing cauſes, nothing ſhould be truſted to chance. Experience muſt preſerve one uniform tenor, and examples muſt be ſelected with circumſpection. The leſs children aſſociate with companions of their own age, the leſs they know of the world, the ſtronger their taſte for literature, the more forcible will be the impreſſion that will be made upon them by the pictures of life, and the characters and ſentiments which they meet with in books. Books for ſuch children ought to be *ſifted* by an academy * of enlightened parents.

Without particular examples, the moſt obvious truths are not brought home to our buſineſs. We ſhall ſelect a few examples from a work of high and deſerved reputation, from a work which we much admire, "Berquin's Children's Friend." We do not mean to criticiſe this work as a literary production, but ſimply to point out to parents, that, even in the beſt books for children, much muſt ſtill be left to the judgment of the preceptor, much in the choice of ſtories, and particular paſſages ſuited to different pupils.

In "The Children's Friend" there are ſeveral ſtories well adapted to one claſs of children, but entirely unfit for another. In the ſtory called the Hobgoblin, Antonia, a little girl "who has been "told a hundred fooliſh ſtories by her maid, particularly one

* V. Academie della Cruſca.

"about

" about a black faced goblin," is repreſented as making a lamentable outcry at the ſight of a chimney-ſweeper; firſt ſhe runs for refuge to the kitchen, the laſt place to which ſhe ſhould run; then to the pantry; thence ſhe jumps out of the window, " half " dead with terror," and in the elegant language of the tranſlator, *almoſt ſplits her throat, with crying out Help! Help!* In a few minutes ſhe diſcovers her error, is heartily aſhamed, and " ever " afterwards Antonia was the firſt to laugh at ſilly ſtories, told by " ſilly people of hobgoblins, and the like, to fright her."

For children who have had the misfortune to have heard the hundred fooliſh ſtories of a fooliſh maid, this apparition of the chimney-ſweeper is well managed; though, perhaps, ridicule might not effect ſo ſudden a cure in all caſes as it did in that of Antonia. By children who have not acquired terrors of the black faced goblin, and who have not the habit of frequenting the kitchen and the pantry, this ſtory ſhould never be read.

" The little miſs deceived by her maid," who takes her mamma's keys out of her drawers, and who ſteals ſugar and tea for her maid, that ſhe may have the pleaſure of playing with a couſin whom her mother had forbidden her to ſee, is not an example that need be introduced into any well regulated family. The picture of Amelia's miſery is drawn by the hand of a maſter: terror and pity, we are told by the tragic poets, purify the mind; but there are minds that do not require this ſpecies of purification. Powerful antidotes are neceſſary to combat powerful poiſons; but where no poiſon has been imbibed, are not antidotes more dangerous than uſeful?

The ſtories called "The little gamblers; blind man's buff; and honeſty the beſt policy;" are ſtories which may do a great deal of good to bad children, but they ſhould not be given to thoſe of another deſcription. The young gentlemen who cheat at cards, and who pocket ſilver fiſh, ſhould have no admittance any where. It is not neceſſary to put *children* upon their guard againſt aſſociates whom they are not likely to meet; or need we introduce the vulgar and miſchievous ſchoolboy to any but ſchoolboys. Martin, who throws ſquibs at people in the ſtreet, who faſtens rabbits tails behind their backs, who fiſhes for their wigs, who ſticks up pins in his friends chairs, who carries a hideous maſk in his pocket to frighten little children, and who is himſelf frightened into repentance by a ſpectre with a ſpeaking trumpet, is a very objectionable though an excellent dramatic character. The part of the ſpectre is played by the groom: this is ill contrived in a drama for children; grooms ſhould have nothing to do with their entertainments; and Cæſar, who is repreſented as a pleaſing character, ſhould not be ſuppoſed to make the poſtillion a party in his inventions.

"*A good heart compenſates for many indiſcretions*" is a dangerous title for a play for young people; becauſe *many* is an indefinite term; and in ſettling how many, the calculations of parents and children may vary materially. This little play is ſo charmingly written, the character of the imprudent and generous Frederick is ſo likely to excite imitation, that we muſt doubly regret his intimacy with the coachman, his running away from ſchool, and drinking beer at an alehouſe in a fair. The coachman is an excellent old man, he is turned away for having let maſter Frederick mount his box, aſſume the whip, and overturn a handſome

carriage. Frederick, touched with gratitude and compaſſion, gives the old man all his pocket-money, and ſells a watch and ſome books to buy clothes for him. The motives of Frederick's conduct are excellent, and as they are miſrepreſented by a treacherous and hypocritical couſin, we ſympathiſe more ſtrongly with the hero of the piece; and all his indiſcretions appear, at leaſt, amiable defects. A nice obſerver * of the human heart ſays, that we are never inclined to cure ourſelves of any defect which makes us agreeable. Frederick's real virtues will not, probably, excite imitation ſo much as his imaginary excellencies. We ſhould take the utmoſt care not to aſſociate in the mind the ideas of imprudence, and of generoſity; of hypocriſy, and of prudence: on the contrary, it ſhould be ſhewn that prudence is neceſſary to real benevolence; that no virtue is more uſeful, and conſequently more reſpectable, than juſtice. Theſe homely truths will never be attended to as the counter-check moral of an intereſting ſtory; ſtories, which require ſuch morals, ſhould therefore be avoided.

It is to be hoped, that ſelect parts of The Children's Friend †, tranſlated by ſome able hand, will be publiſhed hereafter for the uſe of private families. Many of the ſtories, to which we have ventured to object, are by no means unfit for ſchoolboys, to whom the characters which are moſt exceptionable cannot be new. The vulgarity of language which we have noticed is not to be attributed to M. Berquin, but to his wretched tranſlator. L'Ami des Enfans is, in French, remarkably elegantly written. The Little Canary Bird, Little George, The Talkative Little Girl, The Four Sea-

* Marmontel. "On ne ſe guérit pas d'un défaut qui plait."

† We have heard that ſuch a tranſlation was begun.

ſons,

ſons, and many others, are excellent both in point of ſtyle and dramatic effect; they are exactly ſuited to the underſtandings of children, and they intereſt without any improbable events, or unnatural characters.

In fiction it is difficult to avoid giving children falſe ideas of virtue, and ſtill more difficult to keep the different virtues in their due proportions. This ſhould be attended to with care in all books for young people; nor ſhould we ſacrifice the underſtanding to the enthuſiaſm of eloquence, or the affectation of ſenſibility. Without the habit of reaſoning, the beſt diſpoſitions can give us no ſolid ſecurity for happineſs, therefore we ſhould early cultivate the reaſoning faculty, inſtead of always appealing to the imagination. By ſentimental perſuaſives a child may be ſucceſsfully governed for a time, but that time will be of ſhort duration, and no power can continue the deluſion long. The reaſoning in the ſtories of * "Joſeph; the Flower that never fades," and "a Competence is beſt," appear to be of the ſentimental kind. Henry gets amongſt a rabble of boys in a village to teaſe a poor man of the name of Joſeph, who has the misfortune to be out of his ſenſes. Henry's father, in a ſentimental converſation, attempts to convince him of the folly and wickedneſs of his conduct; it is ſo managed that the boy's conſcience is alarmed, and his underſtanding has no ſhare in his penitence. He aſks pardon of heaven, but preſently he joins the rabble rout again, and exaſperates the poor madman, who throws a ſtone at his tormentors, which wounds Henry's cheek, and nearly cuts off his ear. In this condition he is carried home to his father, who tells him that this is a judgment for his crime. "How comes

* Berquin.

" it," ſays the bleeding boy, " that the ſtone hit my head alone, " when all the reſt of my companions are more in fault than I ?" " Becauſe," anſwers his father, " you knew better than they did " that you were doing wrong." This method of reaſoning will not make children conſcientious, becauſe whenever they eſcape *judgments*, they will imagine that they do not merit puniſhment; and the ſtone does not always hit the guilty head. The father's anſwer to his ſon ſhould have been, " I cannot tell why the ſtone " hit your head, but I am ſure that you deſerved it more than your " companions, becauſe you knew better than they did that you " were doing wrong." In " the Flower that never fades" a weeping governeſs talks to her pupil in ſuch a ſtrain about a fault ſo horrid that ſhe cannot bring herſelf to name it, that the child becomes dumb, trembles, ſighs, and at laſt " *falls half ſwooning, as it* " *were, beſide a verdant hillock.*" This " deed without a name" proves to be a little childiſh vanity, which had made the young lady talk in too deciſive a tone of voice at breakfaſt upon ſome hiſtorical point, ſhew her writing with an air of triumph in her eyes, and put Miſs Elizabeth out by keeping bad time on the piano-forte. Mademoiſelle's eloquence appears too pathetic for the occaſion, and though it " pierced the heart of the tender Emily," it might not have the ſame effect on perſons of a more phlegmatic temperament. An appeal to the affections of a child ſhould be made only in great emergencies.

In the dialogue upon this maxim, " that a competence is beſt," the reaſoning of the father is not a match for that of the ſon; by uſing leſs eloquence, the father might have made out his caſe much better. The boy ſees that many people are richer than his father, and perceiving that their riches procure a great number of

conveniences and comforts for them, he aſks why his father, who is as good as theſe opulent people, ſhould not alſo be as rich. His father tells him that he is rich, that he has a large garden, and a fine eſtate; the boy aſks to ſee it, and his father takes him to the top of a high hill, and ſhewing him an extenſive proſpect, ſays to him, "All this is my eſtate." The boy croſs queſtions his father, and finds out that it is not his eſtate, but that he may enjoy the pleaſure of looking at it, and that he can buy wood when he wants it for firing; veniſon, without hunting the deer himſelf; fiſh, without fiſhing; and butter, without poſſeſſing all the cows that graze in the valley; therefore he calls himſelf maſter of the woods, the deer, the herds, the huntſmen, and the labourers that he beholds. This is * poetic philoſophy, but it is not ſufficiently accurate for a child; it would confound his ideas of property, and it would be immediately contradicted by his experience. The father's reaſoning is perfectly good, and well adapted to his pupil's capacity, when he aſks "whether he ſhould not require a ſuperfluous appetite to enjoy ſuperfluous diſhes at his meals." In returning from his walk, the boy ſees a mill that is out of repair, a meadow that is flooded, and a quantity of hay ſpoiled; he obſerves that the owners of theſe things muſt be ſadly vexed by ſuch accidents, and his father congratulates himſelf upon their not being his property. Here is a direct contradiction; for a few minutes before he had aſſerted that they belonged to him. Property is often the cauſe of much anxiety to its poſſeſſor, but the queſtion is, whether the pains, or the pleaſures of poſſeſſing it, predominate; if this queſtion could not be fully diſcuſſed, it ſhould not be partially ſtated. To ſilence a child in argument is eaſy, to convince him is

* V. Hor. 2 Epiſt. lib. ii.

difficult; ſophiſtry or wit ſhould never be uſed to confound the underſtanding. Reaſon has equal force from the lips of the giant and of the dwarf.

Theſe minute criticiſms may appear invidious, but it is hoped that they will be conſidered only as illuſtrations of general principles; illuſtrations neceſſary to our ſubject. We have choſen M. Berquin's work becauſe of its univerſal popularity; probably all the examples which have been ſelected are in the recollection of moſt readers, or at leaſt it is eaſy to refer to them, becauſe "The "Children's Friend" is to be found in every houſe where there are any children. The principles by which we have examined Berquin may be applied to all books of the ſame claſs. Sandford and Merton, Madame de Silleri's Theatre of Education, and her Tales of the Caſtle, Madame de la Fite's Tales and Converſations, Mrs. Smith's Rural Walks, with a long liſt of other books for children, which have conſiderable merit, would deſerve a ſeparate analyſis, if literary criticiſm were our object. A critic once, with indefatigable ill-nature, picked out all the faults of a beautiful poem, and preſented them to Apollo. The god ordered a buſhel of his beſt Parnaſſian wheat to be carefully winnowed, and he preſented the critic with the chaff. Our wiſh is to ſeparate the ſmall portion of what is uſeleſs from the excellent nutriment contained in the books we have mentioned.

With reſpect to ſentimental ſtories *, and books of mere entertainment, we muſt remark, that they ſhould be ſparingly uſed, eſpecially in the education of girls. This ſpecies of reading cultivates

* V. Sympathy and Senſibility.

what

what is called the heart prematurely, lowers the tone of the mind, and induces indifference for thoſe common pleaſures and occupations which, however trivial in themſelves, conſtitute by far the greateſt portion of our daily happineſs. Stories are the novels of childhood. We know, from common experience, the effects which are produced upon the female mind by immoderate novel-reading. To thoſe who acquire this taſte every object becomes diſguſting which is not in an attitude for poetic painting; a ſpecies of moral pictureſque is ſought for in every ſcene of life, and this is not always compatible with ſound ſenſe, or with ſimple reality. Gainſborough's country girl, as it has been humorouſly * remarked, "is "a much more pictureſque object than a girl neatly dreſſed in a "clean white frock, but for this reaſon are all children to go in "rags?" A tragedy heroine, weeping, ſwooning, dying, is a moral-pictureſque object; but the frantic paſſions, which have the beſt effect upon the ſtage, might, when exhibited in domeſtic life, appear to be drawn upon too large a ſcale to pleaſe. The difference between reality and fiction is ſo great, that thoſe who copy from any thing but nature are continually diſpoſed to make miſtakes in their conduct, which appear ludicrous to the impartial ſpectator. Pathos depends on ſuch nice circumſtances, that domeſtic ſentimental diſtreſſes are in a perilous ſituation, the ſympathy of their audience is not always in the power of the fair performers. Phrenzy itſelf may be turned to farce †. "Enter the "princeſs mad in white ſattin, and her attendant mad in white "linen."

* V. A Letter of Mr. Wyndham's to Mr. Repton, in Repton on Landſcape Gardening.

† The Critic.

Beſides

Beſides the danger of creating a romantic taſte, there is reaſon to believe, that the ſpecies of reading to which we object has an effect directly oppoſite to what it is intended to produce. It diminiſhes, inſtead of increaſing, the ſenſibility of the heart; a combination of romantic imagery is requiſite to act upon the aſſociations of ſentimental people, and they are virtuous only when virtue is in perfectly good taſte. An eloquent philoſopher* obſerves, that in the deſcription of ſcenes of diſtreſs in romance and poetry the diſtreſs is always made *elegant*; the imagination, which has been accuſtomed to this delicacy in fictitious narrations, revolts from the diſguſting circumſtances which attend real poverty, diſeaſe, and miſery; the emotions of pity, and the exertions of benevolence, are conſequently repreſſed preciſely at the time when they are neceſſary to humanity.

With reſpect to pity, it is a ſpontaneous natural emotion, which is ſtrongly felt by children, but they cannot properly be ſaid to feel benevolence till they are capable of reaſoning. Charity muſt in them be a very doubtful virtue; they cannot be competent judges as to the general utility of what they give. Perſons of the moſt enlarged underſtanding find it neceſſary to be extremely cautious in charitable donations, leſt they ſhould do more harm than good. Children cannot ſee beyond the firſt link in the chain which holds ſociety together; at the beſt, then, their charity can be but a partial virtue. But in fact children have nothing to give; they think that they give when they diſpoſe of the property of their parents; they ſuffer no privation by this ſort of generoſity, and they learn oſtentation, inſtead of practiſing ſelf-denial. Berquin, in his excellent

* Profeſſor Stewart.

ſtory

ſtory of "The Little Needle Woman," has made the children give their own work; here the pleaſure of employment is immediately connected with the gratification of benevolent feelings; their pity is not merely paſſive, it is active and uſeful.

In fictitious narratives affection for parents, and for brothers and ſiſters, is often painted in agreeable colours, to excite the admiration and ſympathy of children. Caroline, the charming little girl, who gets upon a chair to wipe away the tears that trickle down her elder ſiſter's cheek when her mother is diſpleaſed with her*, forms a natural and beautiful picture; but the deſire to imitate Caroline muſt produce affectation. All the ſimplicity of youth is gone the moment children perceive, that they are extolled for the expreſſion of fine feelings, and fine ſentiments. Gratitude, eſteem, and affection, do not depend upon the table of conſanguinity; they are involuntary feelings, which cannot be raiſed at pleaſure by the voice of authority; they will not obey the dictates of intereſt, they ſecretly deſpiſe the anathemas of ſentiment. Eſteem and affection are the neceſſary conſequences of a certain courſe of conduct, combined with certain external circumſtances which are, more or leſs, in the power of every individual. To arrange theſe circumſtances prudently, and to purſue a proper courſe of conduct ſteadily, ſomething more is neceſſary than the tranſitory impulſe of ſenſibility, or of enthuſiaſm.

There is a claſs of books which amuſe the imagination of children without acting upon their feelings. We do not allude to fairy tales, for we apprehend that theſe are not now much read,

* Berquin.

but

but we mean voyages and travels; theſe intereſt young people univerſally. Robinſon Cruſoe, Gulliver, and the Three Ruſſian Sailors, who were caſt away upon the coaſt of Norway, are general favourites. No child ever read an account of a ſhipwreck, or even a ſtorm, without pleaſure. A deſert iſland is a delightful place, to be equalled only by the ſkating land of the rein-deer, or by the valley of diamonds in the Arabian tales. Savages, eſpecially if they be cannibals, are ſure to be admired, and the more hair-breadth eſcapes the hero of the tale has ſurvived, and the more marvellous his adventures, the more ſympathy he excites *.

Will it be thought to proceed from a ſpirit of contradiction if we remark, that this ſpecies of reading ſhould not early be choſen for boys of an enterpriſing temper, unleſs they are intended for a ſea-faring life, or for the army. The taſte for adventure is abſolutely incompatible with the ſober perſeverance neceſſary to ſucceſs in any other liberal profeſſions. To girls this ſpecies of reading cannot be as dangerous as it is to boys; girls muſt very ſoon perceive the impoſſibility of their rambling about the world in queſt of adventures; and where there appears an obvious impoſſibility in gratifying any wiſh, it is not likely to become, or at leaſt to continue, a torment to the imagination. Boys, on the contrary, from the habits of their education, are prone to admire, and to imitate, every thing like enterpriſe and heroiſm. Courage and fortitude are the virtues of men, and it is natural that boys ſhould deſire, if they believe that they poſſeſs theſe virtues, to be placed in thoſe great and extraordinary ſituations which can diſplay them to advantage. The taſte for adventure is not repreſſed in boys by the impoſſibility

* V. Sympathy and Senſibility.

of

of its indulgence, the world is before them, and they think that fame promiſes the higheſt prize to thoſe who will moſt boldly venture in the lottery of fortune: the rational probability of ſucceſs few young people are able, fewer ſtill are willing, to calculate; and the calculations of prudent friends have little power over their underſtandings, or at leaſt over their imagination, the part of the underſtanding which is moſt likely to decide their conduct. From general maxims we cannot expect that young people ſhould learn much prudence; each individual admits the propriety of the rule, yet believes himſelf to be a privileged exception. Where any prize is ſuppoſed to be in the gift of fortune, every man, or every young man, takes it for granted that he is a favourite, and that it will be beſtowed upon him. The profits of commerce and of agriculture, the profits of every art and profeſſion, can be eſtimated with tolerable accuracy; the value of activity, application, and abilities, can be reſpectively meaſured by ſome certain ſtandard. Modeſt, or even prudent people, will ſcruple to rate themſelves in all of theſe qualifications ſuperior to their neighbours; but every man will allow that, in point of good fortune, at any game of chance, he thinks himſelf upon a fair level with every other competitor.

When a young man deliberates upon what courſe of life he ſhall follow, the patient drudgery of a trade, the laborious mental exertions requiſite to prepare him for a profeſſion, muſt appear to him in a formidable light, compared with the alluring proſpects preſented by an adventuring imagination. At this time of life it will be too late ſuddenly to change the taſte; it will be inconvenient, if not injurious, to reſtrain a young man's inclinations by force or au-

thority; it will be imprudent, perhaps fatally imprudent, to leave them uncontrolled. Precautions ſhould therefore be taken long before this period, and the earlier they are taken the better. It is not idle refinement to aſſert, that the firſt impreſſions which are made upon the imagination, though they may be changed by ſubſequent circumſtances, yet are diſcernible in every change, and are ſeldom entirely effaced from the mind, though it may be difficult to trace them through all their various appearances. A boy, who at ſeven years old longs to be Robinſon Cruſoe, or Sindbad the ſailor, may at ſeventeen retain the ſame taſte for adventure and enterprize, though mixed ſo as to be leſs diſcernible, with the incipient paſſions of avarice and ambition; he has the ſame diſpoſitions modified by a ſlight knowledge of real life, and guided by the manners and converſation of his friends and acquaintance. Robinſon Cruſoe and Sindbad will no longer be his favourite heroes; but he will now admire the ſoldier of fortune, the commercial adventurer, or the nabob, who has diſcovered in the eaſt the ſecret of Aladdin's wonderful lamp; and who has realiſed the treaſures of Aboulcaſem.

The hiſtory of realities written in an entertaining manner appears not only better ſuited to the purpoſes of education, but alſo more agreeable to young people than improbable fictions. We have ſeen the reaſons why it is dangerous to pamper the taſte early with mere books of entertainment; to voyages and travels we have made ſome objections. Natural hiſtory is a ſtudy particularly ſuited to children: it cultivates their talents for obſervation, applies to objects within their reach, and to objects which are every day intereſting to them. The hiſtories of the bee, the

ant,

ant, the caterpillar, the butterfly, the ſilk worm, are the firſt things that pleaſe the taſte of children, and theſe are the hiſtories of realities.

Amongſt books of mere entertainment, no one can be ſo injudicious, or ſo unjuſt, as to claſs the excellent "Evenings at "Home." Upon a cloſe examination, it appears to be one of the beſt books for young people from ſeven to ten years old, that has yet appeared. We ſhall not pretend to enter into a minute examination of it; becauſe, from what we have already ſaid, parents can infer our ſentiments, and we wiſh to avoid tedious, unneceſſary detail. We ſhall, however, juſt obſerve, that the leſſons on natural hiſtory, on metals, and on chemiſtry, are particularly uſeful, not ſo much from the quantity of knowledge which they contain, as by the agreeable manner in which it is communicated: the mind is opened to extenſive views, at the ſame time that nothing above the comprehenſion of children is introduced. The mixture of moral and ſcientific leſſons is happily managed ſo as to relieve the attention; ſome of the moral leſſons contain ſound argument, and ſome diſplay juſt views of life. "Perſeverance againſt For-"tune," "The Price of Victory," "Eyes and no Eyes," have been generally admired as much by children as by parents.

There is a little book called "Leiſure Hours," which contains a great deal of knowledge ſuited to young people; but they muſt obſerve, that the ſtyle is not elegant; perhaps in a future edition the ſtyle may be reviſed. The "Converſations d'Emile" are elegantly written, and the character of the mother and child admirably well preſerved. White of Selborne's Naturaliſt's Calendar we can recommend with entire approbation: it is written in a familiar,

miliar, yet elegant ſtyle; and the journal form gives it that air of reality, which is ſo agreeable and intereſting to the mind. Mr. White will make thoſe who have obſerved, obſerve the more, and will excite the ſpirit of obſervation in thoſe who never before obſerved.

Smellie's Natural Hiſtory is a uſeful, entertaining book; but it *muſt* be carefully looked over, and many pages and half pages muſt be entirely ſacrificed. And here one general caution may be neceſſary. It is hazarding too much to make children promiſe not to read parts of any book which is put into their hands; when the book is too valuable in a parent's eſtimation to be cut or blotted, let it not be given to children when they are alone: in a parent's preſence there is no danger, and the children will acquire the habit of reading the paſſages that are ſelected without feeling curioſity about the reſt. As young people grow up they will judge of the ſelections that have been made for them; they will perceive why ſuch a paſſage was fit for their underſtanding at one period, which they could not have underſtood at another. If they are *never* forced to read what is tireſome, they will anxiouſly deſire to have paſſages ſelected for them, and they will not imagine that their parents are capricious in theſe ſelections; but they will, we ſpeak from experience, be ſincerely grateful to them for the time and trouble beſtowed in procuring their literary amuſements.

When young people have eſtabliſhed their character for truth and exact integrity, they ſhould be entirely truſted with books as with every thing elſe. A ſlight pencil line at the ſide of the page will then be all that is neceſſary to guide them to the beſt parts of any book. Suſpicion would be as injurious, as too eaſy a faith is imprudent:

imprudent: confidence confirms integrity; but the habits of truth muſt be formed before dangerous temptations are preſented. We intended to have given a liſt of books, and to have named the pages in ſeveral authors, which have been found intereſting to children from ſeven, to nine or ten years old. The Reviews, The Annual Regiſters, Enfield's Speaker, *Elegant Extracts*, The papers of the Mancheſter Society, The French Academy of Sciences, Prieſtley's Hiſtory of Viſion, and parts of the Works of Franklin, of Chaptal, Lavoiſier, and Darwin, have ſupplied us with our beſt materials. Some periodical papers from the World, Rambler, Guardian, and Adventurer, have been choſen: theſe are books with which all libraries are furniſhed. But we forbear to offer any liſt; the paſſages we ſhould have mentioned have been found to pleaſe in one family, but we are ſenſible, that as circumſtances vary, the choice of books for different families ought to be different. Every parent muſt be capable of ſelecting thoſe paſſages in books which are moſt ſuited to the age, temper, and taſte of their children. Much of the ſucceſs, both of literary and moral education, will depend upon our ſeizing the happy moments for inſtruction; moments when knowledge immediately applies to what children are intent upon themſelves; the ſtep which is to be taken by the underſtanding ſhould immediately follow that which has already been ſecured. By watching the turn of mind, and by attending to the converſation of children, we may perceive exactly what will ſuit them in books; and we may preſerve the connexion of their ideas without fatiguing their attention. A paragraph read aloud from the newſpaper of the day, a paſſage from any book which parents happen to be reading themſelves, will catch the attention of the young people in a family, and will perhaps excite more taſte and more curioſity,

curioſity, than could be given by whole volumes read at times when the mind is indolent or intent upon other occupations.

The cuſtom of reading aloud for a great while together is extremely fatiguing to children, and hurtful to their underſtandings; they learn to read on without the ſlighteſt attention or thought; the more fluently they read, the worſe it is for them; for their preceptors, whilſt words and ſentences are pronounced with tolerable emphaſis, never ſeem to ſuſpect that the reader can be tired, or that his mind may be abſent from his book. The monotonous tones which are acquired by children, who read a great deal aloud, are extremely diſagreeable, and the habit cannot eaſily be broken; we may obſerve, that children who have not acquired bad cuſtoms always read as they ſpeak, when they underſtand what they read; but the moment they come to any ſentence which they do not comprehend, their voice alters, and they read with heſitation, or with falſe emphaſis; to theſe ſignals a preceptor ſhould always attend, and the paſſage ſhould be explained before the pupil is taught to read it in a muſical tone, or with the proper emphaſis: thus children ſhould be taught to read by the underſtanding, and not merely by the ear. Dialogues, dramas, and well written narratives, they always read *well*, and theſe ſhould be their exerciſes in the art of reading: they ſhould be allowed to put down the book as ſoon as they are tired; but an attentive tutor will perceive when they ought to be ſtopped, *before* the utmoſt point of fatigue. We have heard a boy of nine years old, who had never been taught elocution by any reading maſter, read ſimple pathetic paſſages, and natural dialogues in "Evenings at Home," in a manner which would have made even Sterne's critic forget his ſtop watch.

By reading much at a time, it is true that a great number of books are run through in a few years; but this is not at all our object; on the contrary, our greateſt difficulty has been to find a ſufficient number of books fit for children to read. If they early acquire a ſtrong taſte for literature, no matter how few authors they may have peruſed. We have often heard young people exclaim, "I'm glad I have not read ſuch a book. I have a great "pleaſure to come!" Is not this better than to ſee a child yawn over a work, and count the number of tireſome pages, whilſt he ſays, "I ſhall have got through this book by and by; and what "muſt I read when I have done this? I believe I never ſhall "have read all I am to read! What a number of tireſome books "there are in the world! I wonder what can be the reaſon that "I muſt read them all! If I were but allowed to ſkip the pages "that I don't underſtand, I ſhould be much happier, for when I "come to any thing entertaining in a book, I can keep myſelf "awake, and then I like reading as well as any body does."

Far from forbidding to ſkip the incomprehenſible pages, or to cloſe the tireſome volume, we ſhould exhort our pupils never to read one ſingle page that tires, or that they do not fully underſtand. We need not fear, that, becauſe an excellent book is not intereſting at one period of education, it ſhould not become intereſting at another; the child is always the beſt judge of what is ſuited to his preſent capacity. If he ſays, "Such a book tires "me;" the preceptor ſhould never anſwer with a forbidding, reproachful look, "I am ſurpriſed at that, it is no great proof of "your taſte; the book, which you ſay tires you, is written by "one of the beſt authors in the Engliſh language." The boy is ſorry for it, but he cannot help it; and he concludes, if he be of a timid

timid temper, that he has no taſte for literature, ſince the beſt authors in the Engliſh language tire him. It is in vain to tell him that the book is "univerſally allowed to be very entertaining."

"If it be not ſuch to me,
"What care I how fine it be!"

The more encouraging, and more judicious parent would anſwer upon a ſimilar occaſion, "You are very right not to read "what tires you, my dear; and I am glad that you have ſenſe "enough to tell me that this book does not entertain you, though "it is written by one of the beſt authors in the Engliſh language. "We do not think at all the worſe of your taſte and underſtand-"ing; we know that the day will come when this book will "probably entertain you; put it by till then, I adviſe you."

It may be thought that young people, who read only thoſe parts of books which are entertaining, or thoſe which are ſelected for them, are in danger of learning a taſte for variety, and deſultory habits, which may prevent their acquiring accurate knowledge upon any ſubject; and which may render them incapable of that literary application, without which nothing can be well learned. We hope the candid preceptor will ſuſpend his judgment, till we can explain our ſentiments upon this ſubject more fully, when we examine the nature of invention and memory*.

The ſecret fear, that ſtimulates parents to compel their children to conſtant application to certain books, ariſes from the opinion,

* Chapter on Invention and Memory.

that

that much chronological and hiſtorical knowledge muſt at all events be acquired during a certain number of years. The knowledge of hiſtory is thought a neceſſary accompliſhment in one ſex, and an eſſential part of education in the other. We ought, however, to diſtinguiſh between that knowledge of hiſtory and of chronology which is really uſeful, and that which is acquired merely for parade. We muſt call that uſeful knowledge which enlarges the view of human life, and of human nature, which teaches by the experience of the paſt, what we may expect in future. To ſtudy hiſtory as it relates to theſe objects, the pupil muſt have acquired much previous knowledge; the habit of reaſoning, and the power of combining diſtant analogies. The works of Hume, of Robertſon, Gibbon, or Voltaire, can be properly underſtood only by well informed and highly cultivated underſtandings. Enlarged views of policy, ſome knowledge of the intereſts of commerce, of the progreſs and ſtate of civilization, and literature in different countries, are neceſſary to whoever ſtudies theſe authors with real advantage. Without theſe the fineſt ſenſe, and the fineſt writing, muſt be utterly thrown away upon the reader. Children, conſequently, under the name of faſhionable hiſtories, often read what to them is abſolute nonſenſe: they have very little motive for the ſtudy of hiſtory, and all that we can ſay to keep alive their intereſt, amounts to the common argument, "that ſuch information "will be uſeful to them hereafter, when they hear hiſtory men-"tioned in converſation."

Some people imagine, that the memory reſembles a ſtorehouſe, in which we ſhould early lay up facts; and they aſſert, that, however uſeleſs theſe may appear at the time when they are layed up, they will afterwards be ready for ſervice at our ſummons. One

alluſion may be fairly anſwered by another, ſince it is impoſſible to oppoſe alluſion by reaſoning. In accumulating facts, as in amaſſing riches, people often begin by believing that they value wealth only for the uſe they ſhall make of it; but it often happens, that during the courſe of their labours they learn habitually to ſet a value upon the coin itſelf, and they grow avaricious of that which they are ſenſible has little intrinſic value. Young people who have accumulated a vaſt number of facts, and names, and dates, perhaps intended originally to make ſome good uſe of their treaſure; but they frequently forget their laudable intentions, and conclude by contenting themſelves with the diſplay of their nominal wealth. Pedants and miſers forget the real uſe of wealth and knowledge, and they accumulate without rendering what they acquire uſeful to themſelves or to others.

A number of facts are often ſtored in the mind, which lie there uſeleſs, becauſe they cannot be found at the moment when they are wanted. It is not ſufficient therefore in education to ſtore up knowledge, it is eſſential to arrange facts ſo that they ſhall be ready for uſe, as materials for the imagination, or the judgment, to ſelect and combine. The power of retentive memory is exerciſed too much, the faculty of recollective memory is exerciſed too little, by the common modes of education. Whilſt children are reading the hiſtory of kings, and battles, and victories, whilſt they are learning tables of chronology and leſſons of geography by rote, their inventive and their reaſoning faculties are abſolutely paſſive; nor are any of the facts which they learn in this manner aſſociated with circumſtances in real life. Theſe trains of ideas may with much pains and labour be fixed in the memory, but they muſt be recalled preciſely in the order in which they were learnt by rote, and

this is not the order in which they may be wanted: they will be conjured up in technical ſucceſſion, or in troubleſome multitudes. Many people are obliged to repeat the alphabet before they can recollect the relative place of any given letter; others repeat a column of the multiplication table before they can recollect the ſum of the numbers which they want. There is a common rigmarole for telling the number of days in each month in the year; thoſe who have learned it by heart uſually repeat the whole of it before they can recollect the place of the month which they want; and ſometimes in running over the lines people miſs the very month which they are thinking of, or repeat its name without perceiving that they have named it. In the ſame manner, thoſe who have learned hiſtorical or chronological facts in a technical mode, muſt go through the whole train of their rigmarole aſſociations before they can hit upon the idea which they want. Lord Bolingbroke mentions an acquaintance of his, who had an amazing collection of facts in his memory, but unfortunately he could never produce one of them in the proper moment; he was always obliged to go back to ſome fixed landing place from which he was accuſtomed to take his flight. Lord Bolingbroke uſed to be afraid of aſking him a queſtion, becauſe when once he began, he went off like a larum, and could not be ſtopped; he poured out a profuſion of things which had nothing to do with the point in queſtion; and it was ten to one but he omitted the only circumſtance that would have been really ſerviceable. Many people who have tenacious memories, and who have been ill educated, find themſelves in a ſimilar condition, with much knowledge baled up, an incumbrance to themſelves and to their friends. The great difference which appears in men of the ſame profeſſion, and in the ſame circumſtances,

depends upon the application of their knowledge more than upon the quantity of their learning.

With reſpect to a knowledge of hiſtory and chronologic learning, every body is now nearly upon a level; this ſpecies of information cannot be a great diſtinction to any one: a diſplay of ſuch common knowledge is conſidered by literary people, and by men of genius eſpecially, as ridiculous and offenſive. One motive, therefore, for loading the minds of children with hiſtoric dates and facts, is likely, even from its having univerſally operated, to ceaſe to operate in future. Without making it a laborious taſk to young people, it is eaſy to give them ſuch a knowledge of hiſtory as will preſerve them from the ſhame of ignorance, and put them upon a footing with men of good ſenſe in ſociety, though not perhaps with men who have ſtudied hiſtory for the purpoſe of ſhining in converſation. For our purpoſe, it is not neceſſary early to ſtudy voluminous philoſophic hiſtories; theſe ſhould be preſerved for a more advanced period of their education. The firſt thing to be done, is to ſeize the moment when curioſity is excited by the accidental mention of any hiſtoric name or event. When a child hears his father talk of the Roman emperors, or of the Roman people, he naturally inquires who theſe people were; ſome ſhort explanation may be given, ſo as to leave curioſity yet unſatisfied. The prints of the Roman emperors heads, and Mrs. Trimmer's prints of the remarkable events in the Roman and Engliſh hiſtory, will entertain children. Madame de Silleri, in her Adela and Theodore, deſcribes hiſtorical hangings, which ſhe found advantageous to her pupils. In a prince's palace, or a nobleman's palace, ſuch hangings would be ſuitable decorations, or in a public ſeminary of education

cation it would be worth while to prepare them; private families would perhaps be alarmed at the idea of expence, and at the idea, that their houſe could not readily be furniſhed in proper time for the inſtruction of children. As we know the effect of ſuch apprehenſions of difficulty, we forbear from inſiſting upon hiſtorical hangings, eſpecially as we think that children ſhould not, by any great apparatus for teaching them hiſtory, be induced to ſet an exorbitant value upon this ſort of knowledge, and ſhould hence be excited to cultivate their memories with reaſoning or reflecting. If any expedients are thought neceſſary to fix hiſtoric facts early in the mind, the entertaining diſplay of Roman Emperors, and Britiſh Kings and Queens, may be made, as Madame de Silleri recommends, in a magic lanthorn, or by the Ombres Chinoiſes. When theſe are exhibited, there ſhould be ſome care taken not to introduce any falſe ideas. Parents ſhould be preſent at the ſpectacle, and ſhould anſwer each eager queſtion with prudence. "Ha! here "comes queen Elizabeth!" exclaims the child; "was ſhe a good "woman?" A fooliſh ſhow-man would anſwer, "Yes, maſter, "ſhe was the greateſt queen that ever ſat upon the Engliſh "throne!" A ſenſible mother would reply, "My dear, I can-"not anſwer that queſtion; you will read her hiſtory yourſelf, "you will judge by her actions whether ſhe was, or was not, a "good woman." Children are often extremely impatient to ſettle the preciſe merit and demerit of every hiſtorical perſonage, with whoſe names they become acquainted; but this impatience ſhould not be gratified by the ſhort method of referring to the characters given of theſe perſons in any common hiſtorical abridgment. We ſhould adviſe all ſuch characters to be omitted in books for children; let thoſe who read form a judgment for themſelves: this will do more ſervice to the underſtanding, than can be done by learning

learning by rote the opinion of any hiſtorian. The good and bad qualities; the deciſive, yet contradictory epithets, are ſo jumbled together in theſe characters, that no diſtinct notion can be left in the reader's mind; and the ſame words recur ſo frequently in the characters of different kings, that they are read over in a monotonous voice, as mere concluding ſentences, which come, of courſe, at the end of every reign. "King Henry the fifth was tall and "ſlender, with a long neck, engaging aſpect, and limbs of the "moſt elegant turn. * * * * * * * * * His valour was ſuch "as no danger could ſtartle, and no difficulty could oppoſe. He "managed the diſſenſions amongſt his enemies with ſuch addreſs "as ſpoke him conſummate in the arts of the cabinet. He was "chaſte, temperate, modeſt, and devout, ſcrupulouſly juſt in his "adminiſtration, and ſeverely exact in the diſcipline of his army, "upon which he knew his glory and ſucceſs in a great meaſure "depended. In a word, it muſt be owned that he was without "an equal in the arts of war, policy, and government. His great "qualities were, however, ſomewhat obſcured by his ambition, "and his natural propenſity to cruelty."

Is it poſſible that a child of ſeven or eight years old can acquire any diſtinct, or any juſt ideas, from the peruſal of this character of Henry the fifth? yet it is ſelected as one of the beſt drawn characters from a little abridgment of the hiſtory of England which is, in general, as well done as any we have ſeen. Even the leaſt exceptionable hiſtoric abridgments require the corrections of a patient parent. In abridgments for children the facts are uſually interſperſed with what the authors intend for moral reflections, and eaſy explanations of political events, which are meant to be ſuited to *the meaneſt capacities*. Theſe reflections and explanations do much harm;

harm; they inſtil prejudice, and they accuſtom the young unſuſpicious reader to ſwallow abſurd reaſoning, merely becauſe it is often preſented to them. If no hiſtory can be found entirely free from theſe defects, and if it be even impoſſible to correct any completely, without writing the whole over again, yet much may be done by thoſe who hear children read. Explanations can be given at the moment when the difficulties occur. When the young reader pauſes to think, allow him time to think, and ſuffer him to queſtion the aſſertions which he meets with in books with freedom, and that minute accuracy which is only tireſome to thoſe who cannot reaſon. The ſimple morality of childhood is continually puzzled and ſhocked at the repreſentation of the crimes and the virtues of hiſtoric heroes. Hiſtory, when diveſted of the graces of eloquence, and of that veil which the imagination is taught to throw over antiquity, preſents a diſguſting, terrible liſt of crimes and calamities; murders, aſſaſſinations, battles, revolutions, are the memorable events of hiſtory. The love of glory atones for military barbarity; treachery and fraud are frequently dignified with the names of prudence and policy; and the hiſtorian, deſirous to appear moral and ſentimental, yet compelled to produce facts, makes out an inconſiſtent, ambiguous ſyſtem of morality. A judicious and honeſt preceptor will not, however, imitate the falſe tenderneſs of the hiſtorian for the dead, he will rather conſider what is moſt advantageous to the living; he will perceive, that it is of more conſequence that his pupils ſhould have diſtinct notions of right and wrong, than that they ſhould have perfectly by rote all the Grecian, Roman, Engliſh, French; all the fifty volumes of the Univerſal Hiſtory. A preceptor will not ſurely attempt, by any ſophiſtry, to juſtify the crimes which ſometimes obtain the name of heroiſm; when his ingenuous indignant pupil veriſies the

aſtoniſhing

aſtoniſhing numeration of the hundreds and thouſands that were put to death by a conqueror, or that fell in one battle, he will allow this aſtoniſhment and indignation to be juſt, and he will rejoice that it is ſtrongly felt and expreſſed.

Beſides the falſe characters which are ſometimes drawn of individuals in hiſtory, national characters are often decidedly given in a few epithets, which prejudice the mind, and convey no real information. Can a child learn any thing but national prepoſſeſſion from reading in a character of the Engliſh nation, that "boys, before they can ſpeak, diſcover that they know the proper guards in boxing with their fiſts; a quality that, perhaps, is peculiar to the Engliſh, and is ſeconded by a ſtrength of arm that few other people can exert. *This* gives their ſoldiers an infinite ſuperiority in all battles that are to be decided by the bayonet ſcrewed upon the muſket *?" Why ſhould children be told that the Italians are *naturally* revengeful; the French *naturally* vain and perfidious, "exceſſively credulous and litigious;" that the Spaniards are *naturally* jealous and haughty †? The patriotiſm of an enlarged and generous mind cannot, ſurely, depend upon the early contempt inſpired for foreign nations. We do not ſpeak of the education neceſſary for naval and military men, with this we have nothing to do; but ſurely it cannot be neceſſary to teach national prejudices to any other claſs of young men. If theſe prejudices are ridiculed by ſenſible parents, children will not be miſled by partial authors; general aſſertions will be of little conſequence to thoſe

* V. Guthrie's Geographical, Hiſtorical, and Commercial Grammar, p. 186.

† Ibid. p 398.

who

who are taught to reaſon; they will not be overawed by nonſenſe wherever they may meet with it.

The words whig and tory occur frequently in Engliſh hiſtory, and liberty and tyranny are talked of—the influence of the crown —the rights of the people. What are children of eight or nine years old to underſtand by theſe expreſſions? and how can a tutor explain them, without inſpiring political prejudices? We do not mean here to enter into any political diſcuſſion; we think, that children ſhould not be taught the principles of their preceptors, whatever they may be; they ſhould judge for themſelves, and till they are able to judge, all diſcuſſion, all explanations, ſhould be ſcrupulouſly avoided. Whilſt they are children, the plaineſt chronicles are for them the beſt hiſtories, becauſe they expreſs no political tenets and dogmas. When our pupils grow up, at whatever age they may be capable of underſtanding them, the beſt authors who have written on each ſide of the queſtion, the beſt works, without any party conſiderations, ſhould be put into their hands; and let them form their own opinions from facts and arguments, uninfluenced by paſſion, and uncontrolled by authority.

As young people increaſe their collection of hiſtoric facts, ſome arrangement will be neceſſary to preſerve theſe in proper order in the memory. Prieſtley's Biographical Chart is an extremely ingenious contrivance for this purpoſe; it ſhould hang up in the room where children read, or rather where they live, for we hope no room will ever be diſmally conſecrated to their ſtudies. Whenever they hear any celebrated name mentioned, or when they meet with any in books, they will run to ſearch for theſe names in the biographical chart; and thoſe who are uſed to children will per-

ceive, that the pleaſure of this ſearch, and the joy of the diſcovery, will fix biography and chronology eaſily in their memories. Mortimer's Student's Dictionary, and Brookes's Gazetteer, ſhould, in a library or room which children uſually inhabit, be always within the reach of children. If they are always conſulted at the very moment they are wanted, much may be learned from them; but if there be any difficulty in getting at theſe dictionaries, children forget, and loſe all intereſt in the things which they wanted to know. But if knowledge becomes immediately uſeful, or entertaining to them, there is no danger of their forgetting. Who ever forgets Shakſpeare's hiſtorical plays? The arrangements contrived and executed by others do not always fix things ſo firmly in our remembrance, as thoſe which we have had ſome ſhare in contriving and executing ourſelves.

One of our pupils has drawn out a biographical chart upon the plan of Prieſtley's, inſerting ſuch names only as he was well acquainted with; he found, that in drawing out this chart, a great portion of general hiſtory and biography was fixed in his memory. Charts, in the form of Prieſtley's, but without the names of the heroes, &c. being inſerted, would, perhaps, be uſeful for ſchools and private families.

There are two French hiſtorical works, which we wiſh were well tranſlated for the advantage of thoſe who do not underſtand French. The chevalier Mehegan's Tableau de l'Hiſtoire Moderne, which is ſenſibly divided into epochs; and Condillac's View of Univerſal Hiſtory, compriſed in five volumes, in his "Cours d'Étude "pour l'Inſtruction du Prince de Parme." This hiſtory carries on, along with the records of wars and revolutions, the hiſtory of the progreſs

progreſs of the human mind, of arts, and ſciences; the view of the different governments of Europe is full, and conciſe; no prejudices are inſtilled, yet the manly and rational eloquence of virtue gives life and ſpirit to the work. The concluding addreſs, from the preceptor to his royal pupil, is written with all the enlightened energy of a man of truth and genius. We do not recommend Condillac's hiſtory as an elementary work, for this it is by no means fit; but it is one of the beſt hiſtories that a young man of fifteen or ſixteen can read.

It is ſcarcely poſſible to conceive, that ſeveral tratiſes on grammar, the art of reaſoning, thinking, and writing, which are contained in M. Condillac's courſe of ſtudy, were deſigned by him for elementary books, for the inſtruction of a child from ſeven to ten years old. It appears the more ſurpriſing that the abbè ſhould have ſo far miſtaken the capacity of childhood, becauſe in his judicious preface he ſeems fully ſenſible of the danger of premature cultivation, and of the abſurdity of ſubſtituting a knowledge of words for a knowledge of things. As M. Condillac's is a work of high reputation, we may be allowed to make a few remarks upon its practical utility, and this may, perhaps, afford us an opportunity of explaining our ideas upon the uſe of metaphyſical, poetical, and critical works, in early education. We do not mean any invidious criticiſm upon Condillac, but in "Practical Education" we wiſh to take our examples and illuſtrations from real life. The abbè's courſe of ſtudy, for a boy of ſeven years old, begins with metaphyſics. In his preface he aſſerts, that the arts of ſpeaking, reaſoning, and writing, differ from one another only in degrees of accuracy, and in the more or leſs perfect connexion of ideas. He obſerves, that attention to the manner in which we acquire, and in which

we arrange our knowledge, is neceſſary equally to thoſe who would learn, and to thoſe who would teach, with ſucceſs. Theſe remarks are juſt; but does not he draw an erroneous concluſion from his own principles, when he infers, that the firſt leſſons, which we ſhould teach a child, ought to be metaphyſical. He has given us an abſtract of thoſe which he calls preliminary leſſons; on the operations of the ſoul, on attention, judgment, imagination, &c. he adds, that he thought it uſeleſs to give to the public the converſations and explanations which he had with his pupil on theſe ſubjects. Both parents and children muſt regret the ſuppreſſion of theſe explanatory notes; as the leſſons appear at preſent, no child of ſeven years old can underſtand, and few preceptors can or will make them what they ought to be. In the firſt leſſon on the different ſpecies of ideas the abbè ſays,

"The idea, for inſtance, which I have of Peter, is ſingular, or "individual; and as the idea of man is general relatively to the "ideas of a nobleman and a citizen, it is particular as it relates to "the idea of animal *."

"Relatively to the ideas of a nobleman and a citizen." What a long explanation upon theſe words there muſt have been between the abbè and the prince? The whole view of ſociety muſt have been opened at once, or the prince muſt have ſwallowed prejudices and metaphyſics together. To make theſe things familiar to a child, Condillac ſays, that we muſt bring a few or many exam-

* L'idée, par exemple, que j'aî de Pierre, eſt ſingulière ou individuelle, et comme l'idée d'homme eſt générale par rapport aux idées de noble et de roturier, elle eſt particulière par rapport à l'idée d' animal. Leçons Préliminaires, vol. i. p. 43.

ples;

ples; but where ſhall we find examples? Where ſhall we find proper words to expreſs to a child ideas of political relations mingled with metaphyſical ſubtleties?

Through this whole chapter, on particular and general ideas, the abbè is ſecretly intent upon a diſpute begun or revived in the thirteenth century, and not yet finiſhed, between the Nominaliſts and the Realiſts; but a child knows nothing of this.

In the article "On the Power of Thinking," an article which he acknowledges to be a little difficult, he obſerves, that the great point is to make the child comprehend what is meant by attention, "for as ſoon as he underſtands that, all the reſt," he aſſures us, "will be eaſy." Is it then of leſs conſequence, that the child ſhould learn the habit of attention, than that he ſhould learn the meaning of the word? Granting, however, that the definition of this word is of conſequence, that definition ſhould be made proportionably clear. The tutor, at leaſt, muſt underſtand it, before he can hope to explain it to his pupil. Here it is:

"* * * when amongſt many ſenſations which you experience "at the ſame time, *the direction of the organs* makes you take notice "of one, ſo that you do not obſerve the others any longer, this "ſenſation becomes what we call *attention**."

* Ainſi lorſque, de pluſieurs ſenſations qui ſe font en même temps ſur vous, la direction des organes vous en fait remarquer une, de manière que vous ne remarquez plus les autres, cette ſenſation devient ce que nous appellons *attention*. Leçons Préliminaires, p. 46.

This

This is not accurate; it is not clear whether the direction of the organs be the cauſe, or the effect, of attention; or whether it be only a concomitant of the ſenſation. Attention, we know, can be exerciſed upon abſtract ideas; for this objection M. Condillac has afterwards a proviſional clauſe, but the original definition remains defective, becauſe the direction of the organs is not, though it be ſtated as ſuch, eſſential: beſides, we are told only that the ſenſation deſcribed becomes (devient) what we call attention. What attention actually is, we are ſtill left to diſcover. The matter is made yet more difficult; for when we are juſt fixed in the belief, that attention depends "upon our remarking one ſenſation, and "not remarking others which we may have at the ſame time," we are in the next chapter given to underſtand, that "in compariſon we "may have *a double attention, or two attentions*, which are only two "ſenſations, which make themſelves be taken notice of equally, "and conſequently compariſon conſiſts only of ſenſations *."

The doctrine of ſimultaneous ideas here glides in, and we concede unawares all that is neceſſary to the abbè's favourite ſyſtem, "that ſenſation becomes ſucceſſively attention, memory, com-"pariſon, judgment, and reflexion †; and that the art of reaſon-"ing is reducible to a ſeries of identic propoſitions." Without, at preſent, attempting to examine this ſyſtem, we may obſerve,

* "La comparaiſon n'eſt donc qu'une double attention. Nous venons de voir que "l'attention n'eſt qu'une ſenſation qui ſe fait remarquer. Deux attentions ne ſont "donc que deux ſenſations qui ſe font remarquer également; et par conſéquent il n'y "a dans la comparaiſon que des ſenſations." Leçons Préliminaires, p. 47.

† V. Art de Penſer, p. 324.

that

that in education it is more neceſſary to preſerve the mind from prejudice, than to prepare it for the adoption of any ſyſtem. Thoſe who have attended to metaphyſical proceedings know, that if a few apparently trifling conceſſions be made in the beginning of the buſineſs, a man of ingenuity may force us, in the end, to acknowledge whatever he pleaſes. It is impoſſible that a child can foreſee theſe conſequences, nor is it probable that he ſhould have paid ſuch accurate attention to the operations of his own mind, as to be able to detect the fallacy, or to feel the truth, of his tutor's aſſertions. A metaphyſical catechiſm may readily be taught to children; they may learn to anſwer almoſt as readily as Trenck anſwered in his ſleep to the guards who regularly called to him every night at midnight. Children may anſwer expertly to the queſtions, "What is attention? What is memory? What is imagi-" nation? What is the difference between wit and judgment? " How many ſorts of ideas have you, and which be they?" But when they are perfect in their reſponſes to all theſe queſtions, how much are they advanced in real knowledge?

Allegory has mixed with metaphyſics almoſt as much as with poetry; perſonifications of memory and imagination are familiar to us; to each have been addreſſed odes and ſonnets, ſo that we almoſt believe in their individual exiſtence, or at leaſt we are become jealous of the ſeparate attributes of theſe ideal beings. This metaphyſical mythology may be ingenious and elegant, but it is better adapted to the pleaſures of poetry than to the purpoſes of reaſoning. Thoſe who have been accuſtomed to reſpect and believe in it, will find it difficult ſoberly to examine any argument upon abſtract ſubjects; their favourite prejudices will retard them when they attempt to advance in the art of reaſoning. All accurate me-

taphyſical reaſoners have perceived, and deplored, the difficulties which the prepoſſeſſions of education have thrown in their way; and they have been obliged to waſte their time and powers in fruitleſs attempts to vanquiſh theſe in their own minds, or in thoſe of their readers. Can we wiſh in education to perpetuate ſimilar errors, and to tranſmit to another generation the ſame artificial imbecility? Or can we avoid theſe evils, if with our preſent habits of thinking and ſpeaking we attempt to teach metaphyſics to children of ſeven years old?

A well educated, intelligent young man, accuſtomed to accurate reaſoning, yet brought up without any metaphyſical prejudices, would be a treaſure to a metaphyſician to croſs examine: he would be eager to hear the unprejudiced youth's evidence, as the monarch, who had ordered a child to be ſhut up, without hearing one word of any human language, from infancy to manhood, was impatient to hear what would be the firſt word that he uttered. But though we wiſh extremely well to the experiments of metaphyſicians, we are more intent upon the advantage which our unprejudiced pupils would themſelves derive from their judicious education: probably they would, coming freſh to the ſubject, make ſome diſcoveries in the ſcience of metaphyſics: they would have no paces * to ſhew, perhaps they might advance a ſtep or two on this difficult ground.

When we object to the early initiation of novices into metaphyſical myſteries, we only recommend it to preceptors not to teach; let pupils learn whatever they pleaſe, or whatever they can, with-

* V. Dunciad.

out

out reading any metaphyſical books, and without hearing any opinions, or learning any definitions by rote, children may reflect upon their own feelings, and they ſhould be encouraged to make accurate obſervations upon their own minds. Senſible children will ſoon, for inſtance, obſerve the effect of habit, which enables them to repeat actions with eaſe and facility, which they have frequently performed. The aſſociation of ideas, as it aſſiſts them to remember particular things, will ſoon be noticed, though not, perhaps, in ſcientific words. The uſe of the aſſociation of pain or pleaſure, in the form of what we call reward and puniſhment, may probably be early perceived. Children will be delighted with theſe diſcoveries if they are ſuffered to make them, and they will apply this knowledge in their own education. Trifling daily events will recall their obſervations, and experience will confirm, or correct, their juvenile theories. But if metaphyſical books, or dogmas, are forced upon children in the form of leſſons, they will as ſuch be learned by rote and forgotten.

To prevent parents from expecting as much as the abbè Condillac does from the comprehenſion of pupils of ſix or ſeven years old upon abſtract ſubjects, and to enable preceptors to form ſome idea of the perfect ſimplicity in which children unprejudiced upon metaphyſical queſtions would expreſs themſelves, we give the following little dialogues, word for word, as they paſſed.

1780. *Father.* Where do you think?

A——. (Six years and a half old.) In my mouth.

Ho——. (Five years and a half old.) In my ſtomach.

Father. Where do you feel that you are glad, or ſorry?

A——. In my ſtomach.

Ho——. In my eyes.

Father. What are your ſenſes for?

Ho——. To know things.

Without any previous converſation, Ho—— (five years and a half old) ſaid to her mother, "I think you will be glad my right "foot is ſore, becauſe you told me I did not lean enough upon my "left foot." This child ſeemed, on many occaſions, to have formed an accurate idea of the uſe of puniſhment, conſidering it always as pain given to cure us of ſome fault, or to prevent us from ſuffering more pain in future.

April, 1792. H——, a boy nine years and three quarters old, as he was hammering at a work-bench, pauſed for a ſhort time, and then ſaid to his ſiſter, who was in the room with him, "Siſter, "I obſerve that when I don't look at my right hand when I ham-"mer, and only think where it ought to hit, I can hammer much "better than when I look at it. I don't know what the reaſon "of that is; unleſs it is becauſe I think in my head."

M——. I am not ſure, but I believe that we do think in our heads.

H——.

H——. Then perhaps my head is divided into two parts, and that one thinks for one arm, and one for the other; ſo that when I want to ſtrike with my right arm, I think where I want to hit the wood, and then, without looking at it, I can move my arm in the right direction; as when my father is going to write, he ſometimes ſketches it.

M——. What do you mean, my dear, by ſketching it?

H——. Why, when he moves his hand (flouriſhes) without touching the paper with the pen. And at firſt, when I want to do any thing, I cannot move my hand as I mean; but after being uſed to it, then I can do much better. I don't know why.

After going on hammering for ſome time, he ſtopped again, and ſaid, "There's another thing I wanted to tell you. Sometimes I "think to myſelf that it is right to think of things that are ſen- "ſible, and then when I want to ſet about thinking of things that "are ſenſible, I can *not*, I can only think of that over and over "again."

M——. You can only think of what?

H——. Of thoſe words. They ſeem to be ſaid to me over and over again, till I'm quite tired, "That it is right to think of things "that have ſome ſenſe."

The childiſh expreſſions in theſe remarks have not been altered, becauſe we wiſhed to ſhew exactly how children at this age expreſs their thoughts. If M. Condillac had been uſed to converſe with

children, he ſurely would not have expected, that any boy of ſeven years old could have underſtood his definition of attention, and his metaphyſical preliminary leſſons.

After theſe preliminary leſſons, we have a ſketch of the prince of Parma's ſubſequent ſtudies. M. Condillac ſays, that his royal highneſs (being not yet eight years old) was now "perfectly well "acquainted with the ſyſtem of intellectual operations. He com- "prehended already the production of his ideas; he ſaw the "origin and the progreſs of the habits which he had contracted, "and he perceived how he could ſubſtitute juſt ideas for the falſe "ones which had been given to him, and good habits inſtead of "the bad habits which he had been ſuffered to acquire. He had "become ſo quickly familiar with all theſe things, that he re- "traced their connexion without effort, quite playfully *."

This prince muſt have been a prodigy! After having made him reflect upon his own infancy, the abbé judged that the infancy of the world would appear to his pupil "the moſt curious ſubject, "and the moſt eaſy to ſtudy." The analogy between theſe two infancies ſeems to exiſt chiefly in words; it is not eaſy to gratify a child's curioſity concerning the infancy of the world. Extracts from L'Origine des Loix, by M. Goguet, with explanatory notes,

* Motif des études qui ont été faites après les Leçons Préliminaires, p. 67.
Le jeune prince connoiſſoit déja le ſyſtême des opérations de ſon ame, il comprenoit la génération de ſes idées, il voyoit l'origine et le progrès des habitudes qu'il avoit contractées, et il concevoit comment il pouvoit ſubſtituer des idées juſtes aux idées fauſſes qu'on lui avoit données, et de bonnes habitudes aux mauvaiſes qu'on lui avoit laiſſé prendre. Il s'étoit familiarié ſi promptement avec toutes ces choſes, qu'il s'en retraçoit la ſuite ſans effort, et comme en badinant.

were

were put into the prince's hands, to inform him of what happened in the commencement of ſociety. Theſe were his evening ſtudies. In the mornings he read the French poets, Boileau, Moliere, Corneille, and Racine. Racine, as we are particularly informed, was, in the ſpace of one year, read over a dozen times. Wretched prince! Unfortunate Racine! The abbé acknowledges, that at firſt theſe authors were not underſtood with the ſame eaſe as the preliminary leſſons had been: every word ſtopped the prince, and it ſeemed as if every line were written in an unknown language. This is not ſurpriſing, for how is it poſſible that a boy of ſeven or eight years old, who could know nothing of life and manners, could taſte the wit and humour of Moliere; and, incapable as he muſt have been of ſympathy with the violent paſſions of tragic heroes and heroines, how could he admire the lofty dramas of Racine? We are willing to ſuppoſe, that the young prince of Parma was quick and well-informed for his age, but to judge of what is practicable we muſt produce examples from common life, inſtead of prodigies.

S——, a boy of nine years old, of whoſe abilities the reader will be able to form ſome judgment from anecdotes in the following pages, whoſe underſtanding was not wholly uncultivated, when he was between nine and ten years old expreſſed a wiſh to read ſome of Shakſpeare's plays. King John was given to him. After the book had been before him for one winter's evening, he returned it to his father, declaring that he did not underſtand one word of the play, he could not make out what the people were about, and he did not wiſh to read any more of it. His brother H——, at twelve years old, had made an equally ineffectual attempt to read Shakſpeare; he was alſo equally decided and honeſt in expreſſing his diſlike

diſlike to it; he was much ſurpriſed at ſeeing his ſiſter B——, who was a year or two older than himſelf, reading Shakſpeare with great avidity, and he frequently aſked what it was in that book that could entertain her. Two years afterwards, when H—— was between fourteen and fifteen, he made another trial, and he found that he underſtood the language of Shakſpeare without any difficulty. He read all the hiſtorical plays with the greateſt eagerneſs, and particularly ſeized the character of Falſtaff. He gave a humorous deſcription of the figure and dreſs which he ſuppoſed Sir John ſhould have, of his manner of ſitting, ſpeaking, and walking. Probably, if H—— had been preſſed to read Shakſpeare at the time when he did not underſtand it, he might never have read theſe plays with real pleaſure during his whole life. Two years increaſe prodigiouſly the vocabulary and the ideas of young people, and preceptors ſhould conſider, that what we call literary taſte cannot be formed without a variety of knowledge. The productions of our ableſt writers cannot pleaſe, till we are familiariſed to the ideas which they contain, or to which they allude*.

Poetry is uſually ſuppoſed to be well ſuited to the taſte and capacity of children. In the infancy of taſte and of eloquence rhetorical language is conſtantly admired; the bold expreſſion of ſtrong feeling, and the ſimple deſcription of the beauties of nature, are found to intereſt both cultivated and uncultivated minds. To underſtand deſcriptive poetry no previous knowledge is required, beyond what common obſervation and ſympathy ſupply; the ana-

* As this page was ſent over to us for correction, we ſeize the opportunity of expreſſing our wiſh that "Botanical Dialogues, by a Lady," had come ſooner to our hands; it contains much that we think peculiarly valuable.

logies and tranſitions of thought are ſlight and obvious; no labour of attention is demanded, no active effort of the mind is requiſite to follow them. The pleaſures of ſimple ſenſation are by deſcriptive poetry recalled to the imagination, and we live over again our paſt lives without increaſing, and without deſiring to increaſe, our ſtock of knowledge. If theſe obſervations be juſt, there muſt appear many reaſons, why even that ſpecies of poetry, which they can underſtand, ſhould not be the early ſtudy of children; from time to time it may be an agreeable amuſement, but it ſhould not become a part of their daily occupations. We do not want to retrace perpetually in their memories a few muſical words, or a few ſimple ſenſations; our object is to enlarge the ſphere of our pupil's capacity, to ſtrengthen the habits of attention, and to exerciſe all the powers of the mind. The inventive and the reaſoning faculties muſt be injured by the repetition of vague expreſſions, and of exaggerated deſcription, with which moſt poetry abounds. Childhood is the ſeaſon for obſervation, and thoſe who obſerve accurately will afterwards be able to deſcribe accurately: but thoſe, who merely read deſcriptions, can preſent us with nothing but the pictures of pictures. We have reaſon to believe that children, who have not been accuſtomed to read a vaſt deal of poetry, are not for that reaſon leſs likely to excel in poetic language. The reader will judge from the following explanations of Gray's Hymn to Adverſity, that the boy to whom they were addreſſed was not much accuſtomed to read even the moſt popular Engliſh poetry; yet this is the ſame child, who a few months afterwards wrote the tranſlation from Ovid of the Cave of Sleep, and who gave the extempore deſcription of a ſummer's evening in tolerably good language.

Jan. 1796. S—— (nine years old) learned by heart the Hymn

to

to Adverſity. When he came to repeat this poem, he did not repeat it well, and he had it not perfectly by heart. His father ſuſpected that he did not underſtand it, and he examined him with ſome care.

Father. " Purple tyrants." Why purple?

S——. Becauſe purple is a colour ſomething like red and black; and tyrants look red and black.

Father. No. Kings were formerly called tyrants, and they wore purple robes: the purple of the ancients is ſuppoſed to be not the colour which we call purple, but that which we call ſcarlet.

" When firſt thy fire to ſend on earth
" Virtue, his darling child, deſign'd,
" To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
" And bade to form her infant mind."

When S—— was aſked who was meant in theſe lines by " thy " fire," he frowned terribly; but after ſome deliberation he diſcovered, that " thy fire" meant Jove, the father, or fire of Adverſity: ſtill he was extremely puzzled with " the heavenly birth." Firſt he thought, that the heavenly birth was the birth of Adverſity; but upon recollection the heavenly birth was to be truſted to Adverſity, therefore ſhe could not be truſted with the care of herſelf. S—— at length diſcovered, that Jove muſt have had two daughters, and he ſaid he ſuppoſed that Virtue muſt have been one of theſe daughters, and that ſhe muſt have been ſiſter to Adverſity, who was to be her nurſe, and who was to form her infant mind:

he now perceived that the expreſſion, " Stern, rugged nurſe," referred to Adverſity ; before this he ſaid, he did not know who it meant, whoſe " rigid lore" was alluded to in theſe two lines, or who bore it with patience.

" Stern, rugged nurſe, thy rigid lore
" With patience many a year ſhe bore."

The following ſtanza S—— repeated a ſecond time, as if he did not underſtand it.

" Scared at thy frown, terrific fly
" Self pleaſing follies, idle brood,
" Wild laughter, noiſe, and thoughtleſs joy,
" And leave us leiſure to be good.
" Light they diſperſe, and with them go
" The ſummer friend, the flattering foe ;
" By vain proſperity receiv'd,
" To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd."

Father. Why does the poet ſay *wild* laughter ?

S——. It means, not reaſonable.

Father. Why is it ſaid,

" By vain proſperity receiv'd,
" To her they vow their truth, and are again believ'd ?"

S——. Becauſe the people, I ſuppoſe, when they were in proſperity before, believed them before, but I think that ſeems confuſed.

" Oh gently on thy ſuppliant's head,
" Dread goddeſs, lay thy chaſtening hand."

S—— did not ſeem to comprehend the firſt of theſe two lines; and upon croſs examination it appeared that he did not know the meaning of the word *ſuppliant*, he thought it meant " a perſon " who ſupplies us."

" Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
" Nor circled by the vengeful band,
" As by the impious thou art ſeen."

It may appear improbable, that a child who did not know the meaning of the word ſuppliant, ſhould underſtand the Gorgon terrors, and the vengeful band, yet it was ſo; S—— underſtood theſe lines diſtinctly, he ſaid, " Gorgon terrors, yes, like the head of " Gorgon." He was at this time tranſlating from Ovid's Metamorphoſes; and it happened that his father had explained to him the ideas of the ancients concerning the furies; beſides this, ſeveral people in the family had been reading Potter's Æſchylus, and the furies had been the ſubject of converſation. From ſuch accidental circumſtances as theſe, children often appear in the ſame inſtant almoſt, to be extremely quick, and extremely ſlow of comprehenſion; a preceptor who is well acquainted with all his pupil's previous knowledge, can rapidly increaſe his ſtock of ideas by turning every accidental circumſtance to account: but if a tutor perſiſts in forcing a child to a regular courſe of ſtudy, all his ideas muſt be collected, not as they are wanted in converſation or in real life, but as they are wanted to get through a leſſon or a book. It is not ſurpriſing, that M. Condillac found ſuch long explanations neceſſary for

for his young pupil in reading the tragedies of Racine; he ſays, that he was frequently obliged to tranſlate the poetry into proſe, and frequently the prince could gather only ſome general idea of the whole drama, without underſtanding the parts. We cannot help regretting, that the explanations have not been publiſhed for the advantage of future preceptors, they muſt have been almoſt as difficult as thoſe for the preliminary leſſons. As we are convinced that the art of education can be beſt improved by the regiſtering of early experiments, we are very willing to expoſe ſuch as have been made without fear of faſtidious criticiſm or ridicule.

May 1ſt, 1796. A little poem called "The Tears of Old May-"day," publiſhed in the ſecond volume of the World, was read to S——. Laſt May-day the ſame poem had been read to him; he then liked it much, and his father wiſhed to ſee what effect it would have upon this ſecond reading. The pleaſure of novelty was worn off, but S—— felt new pleaſure from his having during the laſt year acquired a great number of new ideas, and eſpecially ſome knowledge of ancient mythology, which enabled him to underſtand ſeveral alluſions in the poem which had before been unintelligible to him. He had become acquainted with the muſes, the graces, Cynthia, Philomel, Aſtrea, who are all mentioned in this poem; he now knew ſomething about the Heſperian fruit, Amalthea's horn, choral dances, Libyan Ammon, &c. which are alluded to in different lines of the poem: he remembered the explanation which his father had given him the preceding year, of a line which alludes to the iſland of Atalantis.

" Then vaniſhed many a ſea-girt iſle and grove,
" Their foreſts floating on the wat'ry plain;
" Then famed for arts, and laws deriv'd from Jove,
" My Atalantis ſunk beneath the main.

S——, whoſe imagination had been pleaſed with the idea of the fabulous iſland of Atalantis, recollected what he had heard of it; but he had forgotten the explanation of another ſtanza of this poem, which he had heard at the ſame time.

" To her no more Auguſta's wealthy pride,
" Pours the full tribute from Potoſi's mine;
" Nor freſh blown garlands village maids provide,
" A purer offering at her ruſtic ſhrine."

S—— forgot that he had been told that London was formerly called Auguſta; that Potoſi's mines contained ſilver; and that pouring the tribute from Potoſi's mines alludes to the cuſtom of hanging ſilver tankards upon the May-poles in London on May-day; conſequently the beauty of this ſtanza was entirely loſt upon him. A few circumſtances were now told to S—— which imprinted the explanation effectually in his memory: his father told him that the publicans, or thoſe who keep public houſes in London, make it a cuſtom to lend their ſilver tankards to the poor chimney-ſweepers and milk-maids, who go in proceſſion through the ſtreets on May-day. The confidence that is put in the honeſty of theſe poor people pleaſed S——, and all theſe circumſtances fixed the principal idea more firmly in his mind.

The following lines could pleaſe him only by their ſound the firſt time he heard them.

" Ah!

" Ah! once to fame and bright dominion born,
" The earth and ſmiling ocean ſaw me riſe,
" With time coeval, and the ſtar of morn,
" The firſt, the faireſt daughter of the ſkies.

" Then, when at heaven's prolific mandate ſprung
" The radiant beam of new created day,
" Celeſtial harps, to airs of triumph ſtrung,
" Hail'd the glad dawn, and angels called me May.

" Space in her empty regions heard the ſound,
" And hills and dales, and rocks and vallies rung;
" The ſun exulted in his glories round,
" And ſhouting planets in their courſes ſung."

The idea which the ancients had of the muſic of the ſpheres was here explained to S——, and ſome general notion was given to him of the *harmonic numbers*.

What a number of new ideas this little poem ſerved to introduce into the mind! Theſe explanations being given preciſely at the time when they were wanted, fixed the ideas in the memory in their proper places, and aſſociated knowledge with the pleaſures of poetry. Some of the effect of a poem muſt, it is true, be loſt by interruptions and explanations; but we muſt conſider the general improvement of the underſtanding, and not merely the cultivation of poetic taſte. In the inſtance which we have juſt given, the pleaſure which the boy received from the poem ſeemed to increaſe in proportion to the exactneſs with which it was explained. The ſucceeding year, on May-day 1797, the ſame poem was read to him for the third time, and he appeared to like it better than he had done upon the firſt reading. If, inſtead of peruſing

Racine twelve times in one year, the young prince of Parma had read any one play or ſcene at different periods of his education, and had been led to obſerve the increaſe of pleaſure which he felt from being able to underſtand what he read better each ſucceeding time than before, he would probably have improved more rapidly in his taſte for poetry, though he might not have known Racine by rote quite ſo early as at eight years old.

We conſidered parents almoſt as much as children, when we adviſed that a great deal of poetry ſhould not be read by very young pupils; the labour and difficulty of explaining it can be known only to thoſe who have tried the experiment. The Elegy in a country church-yard is one of the moſt popular poems, which is uſually given to children to learn by heart; it coſt at leaſt a quarter of an hour to explain to intelligent children, the youngeſt of whom was at the time nine years old, the firſt ſtanza of that elegy. And we have heard it aſſerted by a gentleman not unacquainted with literature, that perfectly to underſtand l'Allegro and Il Penſeroſo, requires no inconſiderable portion of ancient and modern knowledge. It employed ſeveral hours on different days to read and explain Comus, ſo as to make it intelligible to a boy of ten years, who gave his utmoſt attention to it. The explanations on this poem were found to be ſo numerous and intricate, that we thought it beſt not to produce them here. Explanations which are given by a reader can be given with greater rapidity and effect, than any which a writer can give to children: the expreſſion of the countenance is advantageous, the ſprightlineſs of converſation keeps the pupils awake, and the connexion of the parts of the ſubject can be carried on better in ſpeaking and reading, than it can be in written explanations. Notes are almoſt always too formal, or too

obſcure; they explain what was underſtood more plainly before any illuſtration was attempted, or they leave us in the dark the moment we want to be enlightened. Wherever parents or preceptors can ſupply the place of notes, and commentators, they need not think their time ill beſtowed. If they cannot undertake theſe troubleſome explanations, they can ſurely reſerve obſcure poems for a later period of their pupils education. Children, who are taught at ſeven or eight years old to repeat poetry, frequently get beautiful lines by rote, and ſpeak them fluently, without in the leaſt underſtanding the meaning of the lines. The buſineſs of a poet is to pleaſe the imagination, and to move the paſſions: in proportion as his language is ſublime or pathetic, witty or ſatirical, it muſt be unfit for children. Knowledge cannot be detailed, or accurately explained in poetry; the beauty of an alluſion depends frequently upon the elliptical mode of expreſſion, which paſſing imperceptibly over all the intermediate links in our aſſociations, is apparent only when it touches the ends of the chain. Thoſe who wiſh to inſtruct muſt purſue the oppoſite ſyſtem.

In Doctor Wilkins's eſſay on Univerſal Language, he propoſes to introduce a note ſimilar to the common note of admiration, to give the reader notice when any expreſſion is uſed in an ironical or in a metaphoric ſenſe. Such a note would be of great advantage to children: in reading poetry they are continually puzzled between the obvious and the metaphoric ſenſe of the words *. The

* In Dr. Franklin's poſthumous Eſſays there is an excellent remark with reſpect to typography as connected with the art of reading. The note of interrogation ſhould be placed at the beginning as well as at the end of a queſtion; it is ſometimes ſo far diſtant as to be out of the reach of an unpractiſed eye.

desire to make children learn a vast deal of poetry by heart, fortunately for the understanding of the rising generation, does not rage with such violence as formerly. Dr. Johnson successfully laughed at infants lisping out, "Angels and ministers of grace, "defend us." His reproof was rather ill-natured, when he begged two children who were produced, to repeat some lines to him, "Can't the pretty dears repeat them both together?" But this reproof has probably prevented many exhibitions of the same kind.

Some people learn poetry by heart for the pleasure of quoting it in conversation; but the talent for quotation, both in conversation and in writing, is now become so common, that it cannot confer immortality *. Every person has by rote certain passages from Shakspeare and Thomson, Goldsmith and Gray; these trite quotations fatigue the literary ear, and disgust the taste of the public. To this change in the fashion of the day, those who are much influenced by fashion will probably listen with more eagerness than to all the reasons that have been offered. But to return to the prince of Parma. After reading Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Boileau, &c. the young prince's taste was formed, as we are assured by his preceptor, and he was now fit for the study of grammar. So much is due to the benevolent intentions of a man of learning and genius, who submits to the drudgery of writing an elementary book on grammar, that even a critic must feel unwilling to examine it with severity. M. Condillac, in his attempt to write a rational grammar, has produced, if not a grammar fit for children, a philosophical treatise, which a well educated young person will read

* Young.

with

with great advantage at the age of ſeventeen or eighteen. All that is ſaid of the natural language of ſigns, of the language of action, of pantomimes, and of the inſtitution of M. l'Abbé l'Epée for teaching languages to the deaf and dumb, is not only amuſing and inſtructive to general readers, but with ſlight alterations in the language might be perfectly adapted to the capacity of children. But when the Abbé Condillac goes on to "Your High-"neſs knows what is meant by a ſyſtem," he immediately forgets his pupil's age. The reader's attention is preſently deeply engaged by an abſtract diſquiſition on the relative proportion, repreſented by various circles of different extent, of the wants, ideas, and language of ſavages, ſhepherds, commercial and poliſhed nations, when he is ſuddenly wakened to the recollection, that all this is addreſſed to a child of eight years old; an alluſion to the prince's little chair completely rouſes us from our reverie.

"As your little chair is made in the ſame form as mine, which "is higher, ſo the ſyſtem of ideas is fundamentally the ſame "amongſt ſavage and civiliſed nations; it differs only in degrees of "extenſion, as after one and the ſame model ſeats of different "heights have been made *."

Such miſtakes as theſe in a work intended for a child are ſo obvious, that they could not have eſcaped the penetration of a great

* Comme votre petite chaise eſt faite ſur le même modèle que la mienne qui eſt plus élevée, ainſi le ſyſtème des idées eſt le même pour le fond chez les peuples ſauvages et chez les peuples civiliſés, il ne differe, qui parce qu'il eſt plus ou moins étendu; c' eſt un même modèle d' après lequel on a fait des ſieges de différente hauteur. Grammaire, page 23.

man, had he known as much of the practice as he did of the theory of the art of teaching.

To analyſe a thought, and to ſhew the conſtruction of language, M. Condillac, in this volume on grammar, has choſen for an example a paſſage from an *éloge* on Peter Corneille, pronounced before the French academy by Racine, on the reception of Thomas Corneille, who ſucceeded to Peter. It is in the French ſtyle of academical panegyric, a repreſentation of the chaotic ſtate in which Corneille found the French theatre, and of the light and order which he diffuſed through the dramatic world by his creative genius. A ſubject leſs intereſting, or more unintelligible to a child, could ſcarcely have been ſelected. The lecture on the anatomy of Racine's thought laſts through fifteen pages; according to all the rules of art the diſſection is ably performed, but moſt children will turn from the operation with diſguſt.

The Abbé Condillac's treatiſe on the art of writing immediately ſucceeds to his grammar: the examples in this volume are much better choſen: they are intereſting to all readers; thoſe eſpecially from Madame de Sevigné's letters, which are drawn from familiar language and domeſtic life. The enumeration of the figures of ſpeech and the claſſification of the flowers of rhetoric are judiciouſly ſuppreſſed; the catalogue of the different ſorts of *turns*, phraſes proper for maxims and principles, turns proper for ſentiment, ingenious turns and quaint turns, ſtiff turns and eaſy turns, might perhaps have been ſomewhat abridged. The obſervations on the effect of unity in the whole deſign, and in all the

* Condillac. Grammaire, p. 64.

ſubordinate

ſubordinate parts of a work, though they may not be new, are ably ſtated; and the remark, that the utmoſt propriety of language, and the ſtrongeſt effect of eloquence and reaſoning, reſult from the greateſt poſſible attention to the connexion of our ideas, is impreſſed forcibly upon the reader throughout this work.

How far works of criticiſm in general are ſuited to children, remains to be conſidered. Such works cannot probably ſuit their taſte, becauſe the taſte for ſyſtematic criticiſm cannot ariſe in the mind till many books have been read, till the various ſpecies of excellence ſuited to different ſorts of compoſition have been perceived, and till the mind has made ſome choice of its own. It is true, that works of criticiſm may teach children to talk well of what they read; they will be enabled to repeat what good judges have ſaid of books. But this is not, or ought not to be the object. After having been thus officiouſly aſſiſted by a conniſſeur, who points out to them the beauties of authors, will they be able afterwards to diſcover beauties without his aſſiſtance? Or have they as much pleaſure in being told what to admire, what to praiſe, and what to blame, as if they had been ſuffered to feel and to expreſs their own feelings naturally? In reading an intereſting play, or beautiful poem, how often has a man of taſte and genius execrated the impertinent commentator, who interrupts him by obtruding his oſtentatious notes. "The reader will obſerve the beauty of this "thought." "This is one of the fineſt paſſages in any au-"thor ancient or modern." "The ſenſe of this line, which all "former annotators have miſtaken, is obviouſly reſtored by the "addition of the vowel i." &c.

Deprived by theſe anticipating explanations of the uſe of his

own common ſenſe, the reader deteſts the critic, ſoon learns to diſregard his references, and to ſkip over his learned truiſms. Similar ſenſations, tempered by duty or by fear, may have been ſometimes experienced by a vivacious child, who, eager to go on with what he is reading, is prevented from feeling the effect of the whole by a premature diſcuſſion of its parts. We hope that no keen hunter of paradoxes will here exult in having detected us in a contradiction; we are perfectly aware, that but a few pages ago we exhibited examples of detailed explanations of poetry for children; but theſe explanations were not of the criticiſing claſs, they were not deſigned to tell young people what to admire, but ſimply to aſſiſt them to underſtand before they admired.

Works of criticiſm are ſometimes given to pupils, with the idea that they will inſtruct and form them in the art of writing; but few things can be more terrific or dangerous to the young writer, than the voice of relentleſs criticiſm. Hope ſtimulates, but fear depreſſes the active powers of the mind; and how much have they to fear, who have continually before their eyes the miſtakes and diſgrace of others; of others, who with ſuperior talents have attempted and failed! With a multitude of precepts and rules of rhetoric full in their memory, they cannot expreſs the ſimpleſt of their thoughts; and to write a ſentence compoſed of members, which have each of them names of many ſyllables, muſt appear a moſt formidable and preſumptuous undertaking. On the contrary, a child who, in books and in converſation, has been uſed to hear and to ſpeak correct language, and who has never been terrified with the idea, that to write, is to expreſs his thoughts in ſome new and extraordinary manner, will naturally write as he ſpeaks, and as he thinks. Making certain characters upon paper to repreſent to

others what he wiſhes to ſay * to them, will not appear to him a matter of dread and danger, but of convenience and amuſement, and he will write proſe without knowing it.

Amongſt ſome "practical eſſays †," lately publiſhed, "to aſſiſt "the exertions of youth in their literary purſuits," there is an eſſay on letter writing, which might deter a timid child from ever undertaking ſuch an arduous taſk as that of writing a letter. So much is ſaid from Blair, from Cicero, from Quintilian; ſo many things are requiſite in a letter; purity, neatneſs, ſimplicity; ſuch caution muſt be uſed to avoid "exotics tranſplanted from foreign "languages, or raiſed in the hot-beds of affectation and conceit;" ſuch attention to the mother tongue is preſcribed; that the young nerves of the letter writer muſt tremble when he takes up his pen. Beſides, he is told that "he ſhould be extremely reſerved on the "head of pleaſantry," and that "as to ſallies of wit, it is ſtill "more dangerous to let them fly at random; but he may repeat "the ſmart ſayings of others if he will, or relate *part* of ſome "droll adventure to enliven his letter."

The anxiety that parents and tutors frequently expreſs, to have their children write letters, and good letters, often prevents the pupils from writing during the whole courſe of their lives. Letter writing becomes a taſk, and an evil to children; whether they have any thing to ſay or not, write they muſt, this poſt or next, without fail, *a pretty letter* to ſome relation or friend, who has exacted from them the awful promiſe of punctual correſpondence. It is no wonder that ſchool boys and ſchool girls, in theſe circumſtances,

* Rouſſeau. † Milne's Well-bred Scholar.

feel

feel that neceſſity is *not* the mother of invention; they are reduced to the humiliating miſery of begging from ſome old practitioner a beginning, or an ending, and ſomething to ſay to fill up the middle.

Locke humorouſly deſcribes the miſery of a ſchoolboy who is to write a theme, and having nothing to ſay, goes about with the uſual petition in theſe caſes to his companions: "Pray give me a "little ſenſe." Would it not be better to wait till children have ſenſe, before we exact from them themes and diſcourſes upon literary ſubjects? There is no danger, that thoſe who acquire a variety of knowledge and numerous ideas ſhould not be able to find words to expreſs them; but thoſe who are compelled to find words before they have ideas are in a melancholy ſituation. To form a ſtyle is but a vague idea; practice in compoſition will certainly confer eaſe in writing upon thoſe, who write when their minds are full of ideas; but the practice of ſitting with a melancholy face, with pen in hand, waiting for inſpiration, will not much advance the pupil in the art of writing. We ſhould not recommend it to a preceptor to require regular themes at ſtated periods from his pupils; but whenever he perceives that a young man is ſtruck with any new ideas, or new circumſtances, when he is certain that his pupil has acquired a fund of knowledge, when he finds in converſation that words flow readily upon certain ſubjects, he may without danger upon theſe ſubjects excite his pupil to try his powers of writing. Theſe trials need not be frequently made; when a young man has once acquired confidence in himſelf as a writer, he will certainly uſe his talent whenever proper occaſions preſent themſelves. The peruſal of the beſt authors in the Engliſh language will give him, if he adhere to theſe alone, ſufficient powers

of

of expreſſion. The beſt authors in the Engliſh language are ſo well known, that it would be uſeleſs to enumerate them. Dr. Johnſon ſays, that whoever would acquire a pure Engliſh ſtyle, muſt give his days and nights to Addiſon. We do not, however, feel this excluſive preference for Addiſon's melodious periods; his page is ever elegant, but ſometimes it is too diffuſe. Hume, Blackſtone, and Smith, have a proper degree of ſtrength and energy combined with their elegance. Gibbon ſays, that the perfect compoſition and well-turned periods of Dr. Robertſon excited his hopes, that he might one day become his equal in writing; but "the calm philoſophy, the careleſs inimitable beauties of his friend "and rival Hume, often forced me to cloſe the volume with a "mixed ſenſation of delight and deſpair." From this teſtimony we may judge, that a ſimple ſtyle appears to the beſt judges to be more difficult to attain, and more deſirable, than that highly ornamented diction to which writers of inferior taſte aſpire. Gibbon tells us, with great candour, that his friend Hume adviſed him to beware of the rhetorical ſtyle of French eloquence. Hume obſerved that the Engliſh language, and Engliſh taſte, do not admit of this profuſion of ornament.

Without meaning to enter at large into the ſubject, we have offered theſe remarks upon ſtyle for the advantage of thoſe who are to direct the taſte of young readers; what they admire when they read, they will probably imitate when they write. We objected to works of criticiſm for young children, but we ſhould obſerve, that at a later period of education they will be found highly advantageous. It would be abſurd to mark the preciſe age at which Blair's Lectures, or Condillac's Art d'Écrire, ought to be read, becauſe this ſhould be decided by circumſtances; by the progreſs

of the pupils in literature, and by the ſubjects to which their attention happens to have turned. Of theſe preceptors, and the pupils themſelves, muſt be the moſt competent judges. From the ſame wiſh to avoid all pedantic attempts to dictate, we have not given any regular courſe of ſtudy in this chapter. Many able writers have laid down extenſive plans of ſtudy, and have named the books that are eſſential to the acquiſition of different branches of knowledge. Amongſt others we may refer to Dr. Prieſtley's, which is to be ſeen at the end of his Eſſays on Education. We are ſenſible that order is neceſſary in reading, but we cannot think that the ſame order will ſuit all minds, or do we imagine that a young perſon cannot read to advantage unleſs he purſue a given courſe of ſtudy. Men of ſenſe will not be intolerant in their love of learned order.

If parents would keep an accurate liſt of the books which their children read, of the ages at which they are read, it would be of eſſential ſervice in improving the art of education. We might then mark the progreſs of the underſtanding with accuracy, and diſcover, with ſome degree of certainty, the circumſtances on which the formation of the character and taſte depend. Swift has given us a liſt of the books which he read during two years of his life; we can trace the ideas that he acquired from them in his Laputa, and Gulliver's Travels. Gibbon's journal of his ſtudies, and his account of univerſities, are very inſtructive to young ſtudents. So is the life of Franklin, written by himſelf. Madame Roland has left a hiſtory of her education, and in the books ſhe read in her early years we ſee the formation of her character. Plutarch's Lives, ſhe tells us, firſt kindled republican enthuſiaſm in her mind; and ſhe regrets that, in forming her ideas of univerſal liberty, ſhe

had only a partial view of affairs. She corrected these enthusiastic ideas during the last moments of her life in prison. Had the impression which her study of the Roman history made upon her mind been known to an able preceptor, it might have been corrected in her early education. When she was led to execution, she exclaimed, as she passed the statue of Liberty, "Oh Liberty, what "crimes are committed in thy name*!"

Formerly it was wisely said, "Tell me what company a man "keeps, and I will tell you what he is;" but since literature has spread a new influence over the world, we must add, "Tell "me what company a man has kept, and what books he has "read, and I will tell you what he is."

* "Oh Liberté, que de forfaits on commet en ton nom!"
V. Appel à l'Impartielle Postérité.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Bayerische Staatsbibliothek München

XXXX (2 Bde) VIII.84
V. 89

BSB Bayerische StaatsBibliothek

MDZ Münchener DigitalisierungsZentrum Digitale Bibliothek

Edgeworth, Maria, 1767-1849

Practical Education

Bd.: 1. XII, 386 S.

London 1798

4 Paed.th. 76-1
urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10687205-9